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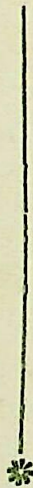
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*Arunachalal! Thou dost root out the ego of those
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The Mountain Path

Vol. 14, No. II, April 1977

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—BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI



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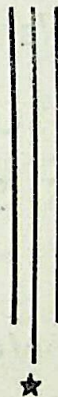
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When I approached,
Thou didst not bend;
Thou stoodst unmoved, at
one with me, Oh, Aruna-
chala !

— *The Marital Garland
of Letters*, verse 54

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THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(A QUARTERLY)

"Arunachala ! Thou dost root out the ego of those who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala !"
— *The Marital Garland of Letters*, verse 1.

Vol. 14

APRIL 1977

No. II

CONTENTS

	Page
EDITORIAL :	
Unswerving Abidance as Awareness Absolute	71
Sri Ramana Maharshi	
— <i>Rama Varma Appan Tampuran</i> ..	75
Why are we here ? — <i>Gilbert Henry Gedge</i> ..	78
Knowing (Poem) — <i>L. P. Yandell</i> ..	79
The Uniqueness of Sri Maharshi's Realisation	
— <i>Prof. D. S. Sarma</i> ..	80
In Quest of a Guru — <i>Marie B. Byles</i> ..	82
A Silent Interview — <i>W. Somerset Maugham</i>	84
The Sage and Thought — <i>Wolter A. Keers</i> ..	85
One-Pointed — <i>Dilip Kumar Roy</i> ..	88
Bhagavan : The Way — <i>Vaikuntavasar</i> ..	89
The Only Reality — <i>Gladys Dehm</i> ..	92
The Whence and Whither of Human Pilgrimage	
— <i>Antony Elenjmittam</i> ..	94
Direct Perception — <i>Selvarajan Yesudian</i> ,	96
That (Poem) — <i>L. P. Yandell</i> ..	97
The Dusty Road — <i>Paul rePS</i> ..	98-99
Some Early Taoist Thought — <i>Murdoch Kirby</i>	100
Primal Reality (Poem) — <i>Ka. Kavana</i> ..	101
<i>Stories from Yoga Vasishtha</i> — XII :	
Story of the Vetala — <i>Translated by</i>	
<i>M. C. Subramanian</i> ..	102
Every Sentient Being (Poem) — <i>Wei Wu Wei</i>	104
Let the Flute Rest (Poem) — <i>G. M. Timosak</i>	104
How I Came to Bhagavan	
— <i>K. V. Balakrishna Menon</i> ..	105
The Being — <i>Ira</i> ..	106
The Ramana Upanishad — <i>Prof. N. A. Nikam</i>	107
Garland of Guru's Sayings — <i>Sri Muruganar</i>	108
Mantra — <i>Dr. M. Sadasiva Rao</i> ..	110
When (Poem) — <i>Ramesh V. Phadnis</i> ..	111

The Arunachala Hill picture in the cover page was drawn by Sri Bhagavan Himself.

CONTENTS — (Contd.)

	Page
Glory of Arunachala — <i>Arunachala Mahatmyam</i>	
— <i>Tr. by M. C. Subramanian</i> ..	112
Solemn as a Seed (Poem) — <i>Ka. Kavana</i> ..	114
Introducing . . . <i>Sri Thapas Swami</i> ..	115
Book Reviews ..	116
Ashram Bulletin ..	121
Letters to the Editor ..	133

Contributors are requested to give the exact data as far as possible for quotations used, i.e. source and page number, and also the meaning if from another language. It would simplify matters. Articles should not exceed 10 pages.

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— Editor.

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The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

The aim of this journal is to set forth the traditional wisdom of all religions and all ages, especially as testified to by their saints and mystics, and to clarify the paths available to seekers in the conditions of our modern world.

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Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

The Mountain Path

Vol. 14. No. II, April 1977

EDITORIAL

Unswerving Abidance as Awareness Absolute

EVERYONE in the world wants to be happy — at all times, in all places and under all conditions. This quest for *ananda* is the universal human desire and the goal of all human endeavour. There are however some persons who are happy at all times, in all places and under all conditions and that too without any desire and without any effort on their part. This strange paradox about happiness — that one who seeks it strenuously often misses it, while one who is indifferent to it enjoys it — is explained by our failure to distinguish between pleasure or satisfaction on the one hand and happiness or *ananda* on the other. We mistake pleasure for happiness and, pursuing it as if it were happiness, end up in all kinds of misery.

In *Who Am I?* and in the *Talks*, Sri Bhagavan brings out clearly this distinction between happiness, which is our inherent and permanent nature, and the pleasure which we from time to time derive from the satisfaction of our desires, physical or mental, healthy or unhealthy.

"Happiness is the very nature of the Self; happiness and the Self are not different. There is no happiness in any object of the world. We imagine through our Ignorance that we derive happiness from objects. When the mind goes out, it experiences misery. In truth, when its desires are fulfilled, it returns to its own place and enjoys the happiness that is the Self. Similarly, in the states of sleep, *samadhi*, and fainting, and when the object desired is obtained or the object disliked is removed,

the mind becomes inward-turned, and enjoys pure Self-Happiness. Thus the mind moves without rest, alternately going out of the Self and returning to it. Under the tree the shade is pleasant; out in the open the heat is scorching. A person who has been going about in the sun feels cool when he reaches the shade. Some one who keeps on going from the shade into the sun and then back into the shade is a fool. A wise man stays permanently in the shade. Similarly, the mind of the one who knows the truth does not leave Brahman. The mind of the ignorant, on the contrary, revolves in the world, feeling miserable, and for a little time returns to Brahman to experience happiness. In fact, what is called the world is only thought. When the world disappears, i.e. when there is no thought, the mind experiences happiness; and when the world appears, it goes through misery."

Absolute and permanent happiness does not reside in objects but in the *atman*. Such happiness is peace, free from pain and pleasure. In the *Talks* it is said :

"If a man thinks that his happiness is due to external causes and his possessions, it is reasonable to conclude that his happiness must increase with the increase of possessions, and diminish in proportion to their diminution. Therefore if he is devoid of possessions, his happiness should be nil. What is the real experience of man? Does it conform to this view?

"In deep sleep, the man is devoid of possessions, including his own body. Instead of being unhappy he is quite happy. Every one desires to sleep soundly. The conclusion

is that happiness is inherent in man and is not due to external causes. One must realize his Self in order to open the store of unalloyed happiness."

For the *sadbaka* no doubt the ultimate goal is the complete extinction of the ego, when the *jīva* and the world cease to be and only the brightness and bliss of pure awareness remains. This goal, gained in a matter of a few minutes by Sri Bhagavan, seems to most of us to be too remote and indeed inaccessible in this our present life. We are repeatedly told and we readily believe that spiritual progress has to be gradual and that moksha should wait until we have gone through the other *puruṣārthas*. Self-enquiry, the direct sovereign method taught by Bhagavan, gets continuously postponed while we are busy discovering and painfully practising our dharma or, worse still, we allow ourselves to be lulled into a spiritual sleep by sentimental bhakti and so escape from the responsibility of our station in life.

If *moksha* is bliss and if bliss is our real, permanent and inescapable nature, what is its relation to dharma? Dharma is not a normative or moralistic concept; it is well-being, health and growth, rootedness in responsibility and freedom to play with the light and warmth of Awareness. The tree does not distinguish between horizontal and vertical growth, between its loyalties to earth, water, air and to the sun. It follows its nature and grows unawares till the seed becomes the tree and matures into fruit. This also is the human destiny. We are seed sown in the soil and eating matter and warmth, become fruit. The eater ceases to eat and becomes food. The man of *dharmā* ripens into the *mukta*. We however separate *dharmā* our empirical nature as *prakṛiti*, from *moksha*, our transcendental nature as *Puruṣa*. Instead of exposing ourselves to the sun wherever we are and drinking in its light and warmth, we make elaborate plans of travelling towards it at some future time.

The traditional view of *dharmā* as that which binds man's social existence to a moral order, that which holds, preserves and protects mankind, can be illustrated by Kausalya's

words to Rama before he left for the forest. She said: "May that dharma which you have nourished with determination and discipline protect you. This is the only blessing I can give." Here we have the popular idea of Rama as the fullest and clearest embodiment of *dharmā*, the horizontal or inter-personal dimension of human growth. The mother rightly regards her son as a moral athlete who has with determination and discipline nourished *dharmā* which in turn is expected to protect him as the mother protects the child.

But Sri Bhagavan prefers to dwell on the truer and maturer image of Sri Rama presented in the *Yogavāsishṭa*. He cites with approval the preceptor's noble adjuration to the pupil who, absorbed in the bliss of awareness, is disinclined to act in the world of time and space. "Holding firmly at heart to the truth of your being, play like a hero your part on the world-stage, inwardly calm and detached, but assuming zeal and joy, stirrings and aversions, initiative and effort, and performing outward actions appropriate to your particular role in various situations." In other words the quest for self-realization, serious *mumukshutva*, goes hand in hand with bold, heroic action. The call to such action, addressed to Sri Rama, is meant really for us. In outward action or the practice of *dharmā*, there is no difference between the seeker and the realized person. The disinterested action which the seeker performs deliberately as a matter of discipline, which is for him a means of discovering his identity with fellow-beings, is for the *jñāni* like Sri Rama or Janaka the spontaneous expression of such identity. The *sādhana* of the seeker becomes the *lakṣhana* of the realized person.

In recommending and indeed prescribing the quest of the Self to all thoughtful persons in the adolescent and adult stages of life Bhagavan makes a radical and necessary departure from the letter of the tradition in order to restore its spirit. In Ch. 3 of the *Ramāṇa Gītā* the paramount task of man is declared to be "the discovery of our real nature which is the basis of all actions and their fruit." This quest for our real nature,

the withdrawing of thoughts from sense objects and steady self-enquiry, is not to be postponed. In Ch. 10, *Sangha Vidya*, one's duty to one's circle and to humanity is defined clearly as organic interdependence to be promoted both by *shanti*, which purifies one's own mind, and by *shakti*, which is required for the progress of society. The attenuation of the ego by steady self-enquiry and the acceptance in practice of normal family and social responsibilities can alone lead to the brotherhood and equality which is the supreme goal to be attained by mankind as a whole.

Bhagavan's comprehensive teaching, with its stress on the search for the Self, helps one to attain adult status and to assume full responsibility for oneself. Bhagavan is like a father who watches apparently unconcerned the child learning to walk, stumbling and falling and picking itself up again, but refuses to mollycoddle it and keep it dependent. There can be no responsibility without self-reliance and there can be no true self-reliance without self-enquiry. We are responsible also, but only in part, to others. At any rate, the sooner we cease to be a burden on others, the better for ourselves and our neighbours. Loving the Lord God with all one's heart and loving one's neighbour as oneself are not two commandments but one. We cannot effectively love and serve our neighbour unless we have succeeded in some measure in loving and obeying the Father as Awareness. Autonomy is a product of increasing self-awareness, which includes sensitiveness to one's surroundings. Once we open and begin to operate a Both-or-Survivor account with the Universal Self, our spiritual resources expand according to real need. Instead of complaining against one's circumstances one derives inexhaustible strength from inner happiness (*uran* in Tamil) and says with Thoreau, "I love my fate to the very core and rind." One's present life is the fruit one has earned and must now eat to the last bite.

The creative person, spiritually attuned, mentally healthy and morally evolved, does not fear novelty, but recognizes and practises the *dharma* appropriate to his unique situation in a fast-changing world. Having no personal

desires of his own, he seeks the universal welfare through the pursuit of truth, beauty, goodness, love. Not self-regarding and having no care for "safety", he contributes clarity and compassion to the on-going movement of life. The unselfish are ever brave, accept loving responsibility for their neighbours and give them a share of their own courage and self-reliance.

As we climb the mountain path the view widens; new responsibilities come to us and are cheerfully undertaken. We are no more inclined to off-shoulder our burden on others. We find fulfilment in mastering rather than in evading *svadharma*. Such *svadharma*, disinterested action surrendered to the Lord (verse 3 of *Upadesa Sara*), purifies the mind and points the way to *moksba*. Through the practice of *dharma* we become progressively more eligible for the ultimate happiness of *moksba*. In meeting the challenge of time we respond to the call of eternity. We learn to live less on the surface and more and more in the deep centre of our being.

In any case, at all times and places and under all conditions, *dharma* has to be practised, whether as duty and discipline or as the happy and spontaneous expression of Awareness. Self-actualization, in the language of Abraham Maslow, is the royal road to self-realization. It is only in and through *dharma* that the happiness of *moksba* can be reached or manifested. Bhagavan could no more help spreading grace and bliss than the sun could help spreading light and warmth.

Moksba cannot be 'realized' by mere intellectual effort. It can only be experienced, and experienced as happiness. It is total freedom from nagging desires, it is pure Awareness. In Bhagavan's own words :

"Unless and until a man embarks upon this quest of the true self, doubt and uncertainty will follow his footsteps throughout life. The greatest kings and statesmen try to rule others, when in their heart of hearts they know that they cannot rule themselves. Yet the greatest power is at the command of the man who has penetrated to

his inmost depth. There are men of giant intellect who spend their lives gathering knowledge about many things. Ask these men if they have solved the mystery of man, if they have conquered themselves, and they will hang their heads in shame. What is the use of knowing about everything else when you do not yet know who you are? Men avoid this enquiry into the true self, but what else is there so worthy to be undertaken?" . . . "Admittedly the way to it may be harder for those who are engrossed in worldly life, but even then one can and must conquer. The current induced during meditation can be kept up by habit, by practising to do so. Then one can perform one's work and activities in that very current itself; there will be no break. Thus, too, there will be no difference between meditation and external activities. If you meditate on this question, 'Who am I' — if you begin to perceive that neither the body nor the brain nor the desires are really you, then the very attitude of enquiry will eventually draw the answer to you out of the

depths of your own being; it will come to you of its own accord as a deep realization . . .

Know the real self and then the truth will shine forth within your heart like sunshine. The mind will become untroubled and real happiness will flood it, for happiness and the true self are identical. You will have no more doubts once you attain this self-awareness." — (Paul Brunton, *The Maharsbi and His Message*)

As ends and means are inseparable, so are *moksha* and *dharmā*. They reinforce each other in healthy individual and social life. They are in fact the empirical and transcendental modes of our being, whose basic nature is the bliss of awareness, stillness, *shanti* broken occasionally by ripples of action, movement, *shakti*. It must be remembered that *dharmā* is bound by time, while *moksha* is the boundless bliss of Awareness.

"One may live in a cave or a house or in the open air, in a forest, or on the top of a mountain, or standing in water or surrounded by fires, but what is the use of all that? O Sambhu! If, but, one's mind constantly abides at Thy Feet, that is Yoga, and he who thus abides is the Great Yogi and he alone enjoys inner felicity."

SANKARA in *Sivananda Lahari*, v. 12.

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"Being is said to be the Ground and activity its attribute. By understanding through activity, the source of activity, one gets firmly established in the Ground."

— *Sri Ramana Gita*, XII, 31.

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"If firm abidance in Being becomes natural this indeed is final freedom and the supreme state and is called direct realisation."

— *Sri Ramana Gita*, XV, 14.

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

By

Rama Varma Appan Tampuran

(The author, a member of the royal family of Cochin who came to Sri Bhagavan some time in the mid-thirties was a reputed writer in Malayalam, deeply read in the Upanishads. During his visit to Sri Bhagavan he sat in unbroken meditation for hours with such intensity that he missed his meal for the day.

The visit had naturally a profound effect on him ever after and he had the highest reverence for Sri Bhagavan.

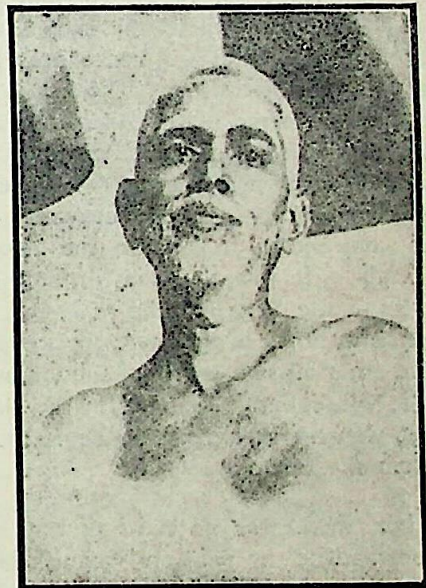
When Sri Appunni, the Malayalam biographer of Sri Bhagavan, approached him for an introduction to his book some time later, Sri Tampuran wrote this essay. This was highly commended by Sri Bhagavan himself and has been translated into several languages. This now appears in 'The Mountain Path'.

THERE is no limit to the surging rise or to the subsiding tranquillity of the mind. Nor is there any limit to its powers to chastise or control and to confer a blessing. It is indeed the cause of both happiness and misery, of enjoyment and of Liberation. If we can only understand the original and changing states of the mind, we shall be able to know the real nature of the illusory dream of the so-called waking state which deludes us. If it is recognized that *samsara* is nothing but a work of the mind, then the mystery of the cycle of births and deaths of the soul will be revealed.

"Mind alone is the (root) cause of man's bondage and liberation."

"He who has subdued his mind is awake in that which is night to all beings."

BHAGAVAD GITA



It is this essential nature of the mind that has been conclusively established by hundreds of such authoritative texts, the truth whereof can be grasped only by experience.

There is no one who does not desire to eradicate misery and attain happiness, nor is there any one who does not strive to this end. Nor are the metaphysicians, who investigate into the active and passive states of the mind, scarce. But they are rare indeed

who know that the search for the truth about the mind has to be made within oneself and not in others, and that happiness and misery are of one's own making. Few are those who enquire after the truth about the Self; fewer still are the Self-realized.

"Hardly one among the siddhas who strive ever understands Me aright."

Thus said Lord Krishna and it is certainly so.

The path to Self-Realization is not easily accessible, and it is extremely difficult to tread. And except that path there is no other access to the Mansion of Eternal Bliss. Mind-control is the indispensable discipline for those who seek to obtain the knowledge of the Self. It is for this reason that *yama* is reckoned as the first step in the eight-fold yoga. Without attaining perfection in yoga, thaumaturgic powers cannot be achieved. It is quite possible that even the *siddhas*, who had achieved such powers, might not have realized the Truth. So then, whom would it not benefit to laud the Saint who has realized It ?

Such self-realization dawned all at once for the Maharshi. The Light of the Self shone forth suddenly like the flash of lightning. When it was time for *karma* to fulfil itself, the meritorious past made the ripe fruit of enquiry into the Truth — which was latent in him — easily accessible. The casual hearing of the holy name of Sri Arunachaleswara and the subsequent conscious experience of the state of death was merely the immediate and efficient cause — purely incidental — a slender contrivance to release the flood of Inner Light. It was the flow of Pure Consciousness of the Self into the *jiva-nadi* (life-channel) ensheathed in the inert physical body, like the transmission of the subtle current from the wire into the filament in the electric bulb ; it was the separation of the Embodied One from the body.

For him there was no need of any discipline, nor had he the pain and anguish of the journey to reach the centre of Pure Being from the rim of the wheel of *samsara*. The Supreme Lord of the Universe lifted him up with His sacred hand and established him at the very *Centre and Source* of Being-Awareness-Bliss. Then, as he opened his eyes, the world was seen resplendent with Light Supreme. Life in solitude, non-attachment to society, abidance in the Self, direct perception of the Truth and such other signs of Enlightenment became handmaids to the pure Soul who in a trice had attained eternal Liberation.

Though the seed of the meritorious past sprouted in the place of his birth, it grew and bore fruit at the sacred spot of Arunachala. What more is needed than a perfect seed, the sacred soil of Arunachala, the showering nectar of the Lord's Grace and the sustaining power of austerity to make the Imperishable Tree of Spirit firmly rooted and to enrich it with an abundance of divine fruits ? Let the tempest rage, the ocean rise up, or the earth quake, the Tree of Knowledge rooted on Arunachala stands immutable. Many pilgrims on life's journey repose in Its shade and countless devotees like birds pour forth their songs from its branches. This is indeed the Kingdom of Bliss or *Vaikunta*.

The aim is one, but many are the angles of vision ; the goal is one but many are the steps leading thereto. The eyes that may mark the aim have no sight, and the ways are dark ; the paths trodden by great men are not easily known and they are diverse. It is arduous and difficult to regulate one's life (conscientiously) after examining and finding out what is happiness and what is misery, what is *dharm*a (duty) and what is *adharma* (dereliction of duty) what is *karma* (work) and what is *akarma* (not-work). It is next to impossible for ordinary men to proceed one step without getting entangled in the meshes of illusion. The physical body is heir to disease : fickle is the mind and the intellect finite in its scope.

It is truly said " that which in the beginning looks like poison, is found at the end to be nectar." No need to wonder that the One Real is seen as the many and in diverse aspects. It is understood by those who have experienced this felicity (of a life of freedom) and that agony (of a life of hard discipline). They alone know who have the experience. In this respect the life of the Maharshi is unique. Lord Arunachala blessed the meritorious Soul with His glance so full of Mercy, lifted him up with His holy hand, and made him share His seat in the Kingdom of Heaven. Only then did Maharshi open his eyes to see the light outside. He had only to look below with sympathy, never to look above and pine.

It is perhaps on account of this we find in much of the teachings of the Maharshi ultimate Knowledge revealed rather than the path towards it, giving pre-eminence to the end rather than to the means. It is also doubtful if he considers the eight-fold yoga to be a temporal discipline pertaining merely to the attainment of thaumaturgic powers. Surely he regards it as a spiritual method intended for the realization of the Supreme State. This is indeed the highest end and aim of yoga. Otherwise it would not be the path of quietude and emancipation, but one of activity and attachment. Desire and dispassion are indeed poles apart and how can Liberation come from bondage? They are fit to receive his instruction who, with faith and devotion, earnestly seek Truth and ardently aspire for Liberation. Save through one's own experience, Self Knowledge is not to be achieved and realized — never through scholarship. That the expositions of the subtle Truth by the Masters who have realized the Self are clearer and more easily grasped than the dialectics of scholars, is due to the fact that the former is the Radiance of Pure Consciousness caught on a crystal-clear mind and the latter is but a dance of ignorance (*avidya*) aided by intellectual brilliance. In the case of the Maharshi, on attaining perfect Self-realization and with the loss of the ego, scholarship evolved spontaneously as concomitant of Wisdom. Can there be anything undisclosed, any hidden principle to those who, on the dawn of Knowledge, see the entire universe as clearly as a crystal held in the palm and discern the One in the many and the many in the One? For those who see at a glance the entire Essence of everything can there be paucity of illustrations that appeal direct to the heart? What are scholars and poets before the Self-Realized One and the scaphic Seer?

The sorrows of the distressed who surrender themselves to him, the doubts of earnest seekers, the disbelief of the sceptics who come to test him, and even the pride of the high and mighty, verily perish in the mere

Presence of the Maharshi. His sacred abode confers Peace and even induces spiritual trance which yields the Bliss of Self-Realization.

"Behold the marvel at the foot of the banyan tree !

Aged are the disciples and young is the Guru.

The Guru's exposition is SILENCE, but the disciples are freed from all doubts."

The Divine Power of Dakshinamurti, the Embodiment of Knowledge, working through the inner being of the Maharshi is within the ken and experience of such insignificant devotees as myself. Who, then, would not long to taste the nectar of the story of such a hallowed One?

"Who but the hard-hearted would desist from singing the praise of Hallowed Souls, which is chanted by desire-free devotees, which is the remedy for the disease of samsara and which is pleasing to the ear and the mind alike ?"

The praise of Maharshi, like that of Yogeswara Sri Krishna, is delightful and beneficent alike to the worldly-minded sunk in the whirlpool of egoistic attachment and wallowing in the ditch of blind infatuation, to those who seek Liberation and to the Liberated. It is indeed our good fortune to live during the lifetime of such a great Sage and to reside in the same country. Blessed are the devotees who spend their time in his Presence.

If in this consecrated offering made for self-purification by the humblest of his devotees, should there be defects of form or want of taste,

*O Supreme Lord of the Universe
Bear w'th the errors of Thy children.
Who cannot even scrawl the letters of
Thy name, Hari,
On the customary layers of rice.*

The life of Maharshi, who has attained Liberation, is not the biography of an individual but the Radiance of the Universal Self, not the expression of a body's acts but the Manifestation of the Spirit within.

WHY ARE WE HERE?

By

Gilbert Henry Gedge

THIS question occurs to many of those on the spiritual path who have had at least some indication of the truth that is the answer to the question "Who Am I?" We cannot go far in our spiritual journeying before we come to the conclusion that there can be only the One, the Divine Source, God. All else is illusion. What, then, is this physical world in which we live? Is that illusion, too?

We can continue asking questions *ad infinitum*, for life itself is infinite, but always and to all the questions the answer is in God. That statement implies the limitlessness of God, the All-wise, All-knowing, All-good, All-loving Omnipresent One, whose true nature the little limited human mind can never fully comprehend. That One is forever expressing Himself, ever pressing Himself out into visibility, into manifest form, and you and I are part of that expression. We are indeed partial expressions of God; we are not yet perfect expressions, or even perfect partial expressions. Yet perfect expressions surely we are intended to be. Does it not follow, then, that our main purpose all the time should be to become just that, more and more perfect expressions of God?

That purpose has for each of us tremendous implications. What do we really know of God? Is it possible to learn more of Him? Above all, is it possible to **Know Him**? Can the human soul become as completely in unison with God as with earthly friends? More than that, can we get to the point where we can whole-heartedly say, as Jesus did, "I and my Father are one"? Whether we believe that such an achievement is possible for us or not, we surely are faced with the responsibility of trying to learn all we can of God if we are to become more perfect expressions of Him. That, too, is the position which

faces us after seeking the answer to the question which was reiterated by Sri Ramana Maharshi, "Who am I?" The little human ego must be lost in God, so that we can *know*, not merely think, that we are indeed one with the Father, know that there is no you or me, but only God, the One Self.

In this position we are not facing a long and difficult road, though it is often so described. What we are facing is the necessity for effort on our part to learn and grow. We need not be alone in that effort, however. Indeed, can we be alone when we remember that we are continually in the presence of omnipresent, infinite Love? It may be that we are insufficiently conscious of that Love. How much time do we devote daily to realising, contemplating the presence of that Love all around and within us, *being* us? That may be a question to answer which we do not find easy, but we can all resolve to keep our consciousness filled with the realisation of the presence of Infinite Love. Then we can ask God to help us fulfil that resolve.

My own practice is to ask the Risen Jesus Christ to lift me up to his consciousness of one-ness with Infinite Love, and I am sure he always answers sincere prayer. At this point let us remind ourselves that Infinite Love is dynamic, not static. It is constantly pouring forth into any channel that may be offered, and our task is to provide the channels. Into those channels will pour forth a Loving Power that is continually at work to produce good of every kind, for each individual and for the world as a whole. Our active co-operation is required, however, for that good to manifest in this visible world, and in the course of our co-operation we learn the lessons necessary for our spiritual progress. To the Jews about to stone him Jesus Christ said: "Is it

not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods . . . and the scripture cannot be broken". (John 10. 34-5) It is to develop and manifest our own godhood that we are here. That is our glorious destiny, but it involves learning certain lessons and developing the will to seek constantly one-ness with God. We may be sure that the more we try to seek the consciousness of one-ness with God, the more aware shall we become of His will being done in us, and of the growth in us of the will to seek Him constantly. There is more in the statement of Jesus : "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you", than is usually read into it.

There is no doubt that our mental horizon will be widened if we do seek the kingdom of God first. The kingdom of God must be where God is, and as God is omnipresent He must be in our mind, our consciousness. Let us remember, however, that God is Divine Mind with limitless ideas. God's creation is and always has been first an idea. That idea must have in it the presence of God and it must be itself creative, constantly striving for expression. All things in the universe were first an idea in the Divine Mind and because of the urge for self-expression the creative idea began to evolve. This continuous 'evolution' has gone on throughout the ages. Is it too much to suggest, indeed, that God's purpose, His 'urge' is and always has been

to express Himself ? Should we not do all we can to realise that Infinite Love is continually giving of Itself in blessing, and that that is the form God's self-expression is bound to take ? Should we not go even further and realise that this world itself and everything in it is God's expression of Himself, the expression of Infinite Love ?

The highest development of this expression is the manifestation of man. But the process has not stopped. Man is still evolving — into a higher type of man. Who is to put any limit to the evolution of man ? Can we ? That is a question the answer to which we know must be "No" ! But there are already greater Beings than man as we know him. There is a school of thought which believes and teaches that this earth on which we live and other planets are the embodiment of some of these greater Beings — and can we prove them wrong ? It would seem that there is necessarily some great Intelligence in charge, in control of the world as we know it, even though we may not always understand the reason for some of the events that confront us. We have faith in the Infinite Love that created us and the world, however, and in that faith we hold fast to the conviction that all is well. In that faith we learn to accept what Infinite Love brings us, and in that acceptance we rise to a higher level of consciousness, realising more clearly our one-ness with God, and demonstrating our spiritual growth.

KNOWING

By
L. P. Yandell

What Bliss ! To know
That I am *Now* and *This* !
To know 'then'
and 'that', to be
Merely illusions of the 'me'.

The Uniqueness of Sri Maharshi's Realisation

By

Prof. D. S. Sarma¹

THERE have been many teachers of *jnana yoga* in our country, but very few *jnana yogins*, many teachers of Advaita, but very few who had the realization of Advaita. Sri Ramana Maharshi, on the other hand, was not only a great teacher of *jnana yoga* all his life, but also a great *jnana yogin*. To use the figure employed by Sri Ramakrishna, he was a man who described Benares after seeing the Holy City with his own eyes and not after seeing only a map of it. The remarkable power which he exercised over the minds of men for generations was due to the fact that all his life he was describing an experience of his own and not merely expounding a doctrine.

It may be said that the Maharshi was a *jnana yogin* by birth. For, even while he was a lad of sixteen, illumination came to him suddenly, without any previous training or effort, and at once he became firmly established in the very centre of Reality for the rest of his life.

The remarkable passage in which he describes his illumination deserves to be quoted :

"I felt I was going to die . . . I did not however trouble myself to discover if the fear was well grounded. I felt 'I was going to die', and at once set about thinking out what I should do. I did not care to consult doctors or elders or even friends. I felt I had to solve the problem myself then and there.

"The shock of fear of death made me at once introspective, or 'introverted'. I said to myself mentally, i.e., without uttering the words — 'Now, death has come. What does it mean? What is it that is dying? This body dies'. I at once dramatized the scene of death. I extended my limbs and held them rigid as though *rigor-mortis* had set in. I imitated a corpse to lend an air of reality to my further investigation. I held my breath and kept my mouth closed, pressing the lips tightly together so that no sound might escape. Let



not the word 'I' or any other word be uttered. 'Well then', said I to myself, 'this body is dead.' It will be carried stiff to the burning ground and there burnt and reduced to ashes. But with the death of this body, am "I" dead? Is the body "I"? This body is silent and inert. But I feel the full force of my personality and even the sound "I" within myself, — apart from the body. So "I" am a spirit, a thing transcending the body. The material body dies, but the spirit transcending it cannot be touched by death. I am therefore the deathless spirit'. All this was not a mere intellectual process, but flashed before

¹From *Hinduism Through the Ages*: By D. S. Sarma, Courtesy : Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.

me vividly as living truth, something which I perceived immediately, without any argument almost. 'I' was something very real, the only real thing in that state, and all the conscious activity that was connected with my body was centred on that. The 'I' or my 'self' was holding the focus of attention by a powerful fascination from that time forwards. Fear of death had vanished at once and forever."²

There have been other instances, in the lives of the mystics and saints of the world, of commonplace things like a tree in full blossom in spring, or a flight of white cranes across the clear blue autumnal sky, or a silvery cascade running down a mountain-slope bringing about the realization of the Universal Spirit. But they have been more or less temporary experiences. In the case of some, the experience never repeated itself. In the case of others, it needed extraordinary efforts to bring it back and make it steady. That is why in the literature of mysticism the so-called mystic way is described as consisting of three stages, after the initial awakening — namely, purgation, illumination and union. In our own religious tradition, we are familiar with long periods of *tapas* which the aspirants had to go through before they could have a vision of the Deity they wanted to see. And it is well known how Patanjali in his *Yoga Sutras* has mapped out the entire way leading to *samadhi* or union, and described its eight stages beginning with *yama* and *niyama*. But, in the case of the Maharshi, there were no periods of *sadhana*, no stages of the mystic way and no laborious practice of *yoga*. The realization that came to him with the thought of death came once for all and it became an abiding possession. The present writer, when he went to pay his respects to the Maharshi in September, 1946, put to him the following question :—

"In the lives of the western mystics we find descriptions of what is called the mystic way with the three well-marked stages of purgation, illumination and union. The purgatory stage corresponds to what we call the *sadhana* period. Was there any such period in the life of Bhagavan?"

And without the least hesitation came the following reply :—

"I know no such period. I never performed any *pranayama* or *japa*. I knew no *mantras*. I had no idea of meditation or contemplation. Even when I came to hear of such things later I was never attracted by them. Even now my mind refuses to pay any attention to them. *Sadhana* implies an object to be gained and the means of gaining it. What is there to be gained which we do not already possess? In meditation, concentration and contemplation, what we have to do is only not to think of anything, but to be still. This natural State is given many names — *moksha*, *jnana*, *Atma*, etc., and these give rise to many controversies. There was a time when I used to remain with my eyes closed. That does not mean that I was practising any *sadhana* then. Even now I sometimes remain with my eyes closed. If people choose to say that I am doing some *sadhana* at the moment, let them say so. It makes no difference to me. People seem to think that by practising some elaborate *sadhana* the Self would some day descend upon them as something very big and with tremendous glory and they would then have what is called *sāksbātākāram*. The Self is *sāksbāt*, all right, but there is no *kāram* or *kritam* about it. The word *kāram* implies one's doing something. But the Self is realized not by one's doing something, but by one's refraining from doing anything — by remaining still and being simply what one really is."

The audience assembled in the Hall were astonished at the vehemence with which the Maharshi spoke these words. He spoke, of course, in Tamil. The present writer later on put the speech into English and sent it to the Maharshi for approval. He approved it and it was published in *Vedanta Kesari*³ with the caption : *Nastyakritab kritena*. The latter is a quotation from the *Mundaka Upanishad*. It means that what is Uncreated cannot be gained by anything that one can *do*.

² *Self Realization* : By B. V. Narasimha Swami, Pp. 20-22.

³ A monthly in English, published by the Ramakrishna Mutt, Mylapore, Madras-4.

IN QUEST OF A GURU

By

Marie B. Byles

IF you yourself suffer from this slightly mad quest, I strongly advise you to read Ramana Maharshi's own words. I hope you will be disappointed, not in his wisdom, oh, no! but in his teaching that the guru is not to be found as people expect, and that he will show you the Light sufficiently to stop *Hunting the Guru*, to use the title of Ann Marshall's most excellent book.

Many people feel the lure of the East, and as soon as they have saved enough money they set sails, or wings or engines to answer the call of the guru from the mystic land of India. Readers will all know the story of the man who out of the corner of his eye catches sight of a yellow robe, or white robe, or no robe at all, drops everything to follow that yellow, white or no robe, finds himself with a small band of sincere disciples, and after that everything is well. Even the author of a learned and well written book on Hindu psychology told the same old adage, 'when the disciple is ready the guru will appear'. True, I could start on my spiritual quest on my own but 'when the disciple is ready the guru will appear.'

Well I duly took advantage of ship-engines for the mystic land.

I met many yellow, white and no robed people. But no guru. One of his disciples told me by letter that the next best thing to meeting Ramana Maharshi was to meet disciples who had known him intimately, and I did meet one of his devotees, but I got no closer to finding the guru.

An Indian lady who entertained yellow robed swamis to lunch, and that sort of thing, very kindly invited me to the next luncheon party for some of them. She was apparently

a little exasperated at my innocent silliness. She said,

'Why are you so interested in yellow robed ones? I think that in the American artist, Earl Brewster, about a mile away, you will find the one nearest to enlightenment you will ever meet in India.'

I duly searched him out. He wore ordinary European clothes! He gave no opportunity for bowing at his feet, let alone kissing them. He would not even give me any advice. He merely said, 'You will be guided. You already are being guided.' He was certainly no guru. I reconciled myself to living alone in the Himalaya Hills with only the snow clad 'thrones of the Gods' as my gurus. At the end of my visit to India I came to the conclusion that the Indian lady had been right.

And so I returned to Australia, guruleless from the land of the guru.

In Australia quite a number of people have recently acquired a sublime faith in the importance of the guru. I possess what I call 'The Hut of Happy Omen' with bunks for sleeping and space for small gatherings. . . . Sometimes friends bring there a guru, gather reverently around him, listen to his words of wisdom or sit silently in meditation, and often add the discipline of fasting. I hear such remarks as, 'Oh, the peace that I found there . . . At length I have discovered what I was seeking.'

It is doubtless very good for us, ultra superior Western people, to find that there is wisdom in others than ourselves. Heaven forbid that I should discourage my friends from welcoming gurus from the East, treating them with fitting honour, and looking after them — even though they expect to be waited

upon by servants, in our equalitarian society where servants in the usual sense do not exist.

But now let us turn to Ramana Maharshi's advice, and also remember that even Aurobindo said that a guru was not necessarily needed, and that the wise psychiatrist, Carl Jung, purposely did not visit Ramana Maharshi, but to observe his teaching sought out one of his disciples.

The following quotations are taken from *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi* from about P. 368 onwards. There are many similar remarks in other places.

'Disciple : I want a visible guru.

Ramana Maharshi : That visible sad-guru says that he is within. Instructions are necessary only so long as one has not surrendered.

D. : Is a teacher necessary for instructions ?

R. M. : Yes, if you want to learn anything new. But here you have to unlearn.

D. : Yet a teacher is necessary.

R. M. : You already have got what you seek elsewhere. So no teacher is necessary. . . . The Master is not outside you as you seem to think. He is within ; in fact he is the Self . . . All are gurus (good and bad). Realization is eternal. It is not newly brought about by the guru. The Master is within. Meditation is meant for the removal of ignorance, of the wrong idea that he is without . . .'

It is certainly true that when the disciple is ready the guru will appear. The laws of life are perfect and what is necessary for you will come without any seeking. But that teacher may not be a particular human being. The trouble is that we do not usually recognize the guru, and do not like him or it when he, she or it appears on the scene. Suffering is the best of gurus, but we try to get rid of it instead of welcoming the lesson it has come to teach us. The teacher we like less and less the further we progress in our own failure

(for it is easier to forgive others than to forgive ourselves). We can only learn from our errors when we can stand aside and leave it to the Master within to teach us. Even when the Teacher is a human being, it may well be words we read in a book, or a chance remark from 'the man in the street,' or perhaps from an evil person or the example of a good one. Very often the Teacher may be a serious accident or illness, or the loss of a person beloved, or the presence of one disliked.

The guru seldom comes in the form we expect ; so the only way is to welcome all that comes, pleasant and unpleasant, and learn from everything and everyone.

But in any case the true Teacher is within oneself, and there is no short cut to enlightenment. A sudden burst of transcendent Light or Cosmic Consciousness may come to some so that they feel as if surrounded by a transfigured world. Others may know the ineffable peace that was found by those who came into the presence of Ramana Maharshi. But no one can avoid the long pilgrimage that lies ahead before there is the perennial experience of the Real Self that has been there all the time. Poets such as Wordsworth and Tennyson had glimpses of this inner Self, but their egos, always changing, were too strong to permit the Light of the Self to shine through them in their old age.

Each person has his own particular way, but whatever help the seeker may find, the guru is within himself, and that guru always demands that he surrender himself to the very rhythm of the universe. And because the laws of the universe are infallible he will find that the guru within is always guiding him infallibly.

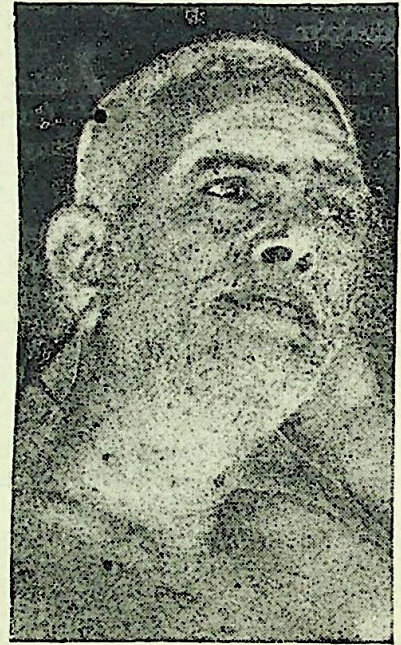
For our consolation let us remember that Mahatma Gandhi found his first and last teacher in his childhood nurse who taught him to banish his fear of ghosts by repeating *Rāmanāma* (the Name of God).

A SILENT INTERVIEW

By
W. Somerset Maugham¹

I WENT to India in 1936. I have among my books the fifteen volumes of Baring-Gould's *Lives of the Saints*, and now and then I take down a volume and read the account he gives of one or other of them who for some reason has aroused my curiosity. I have read the autobiography of St. Theresa and the lives, written by those who knew them, of St. Francis of Assisi, of Catherine of Siena, and of Ignatius Loyola. But it never occurred to me that I might be so fortunate as to meet a saint in the flesh. But that is actually what I did. They called him *The Maharshi*. Pilgrims from far and near went to him for instruction, advice and consolation in their trouble. His *ashram*, his hermitage was at the foot of the holy mountain, *Arunachala*, holy because the mountain was regarded as an emblem of the god Siva.

After a dull, hot drive from Madras we reached the Ashram. We were told that the Maharshi would see us in a little while. Suddenly I fainted dead away. I was carried into a hut and laid on a pallet bed. I do not know how long I remained unconscious. The Maharshi was told what had happened, and that I was not well enough to come into the hall, and so, after some time, followed by two or three disciples, he came into the hut and sat down on the ground not far from the pallet on which I lay. He uttered a few words of cordial greeting. He bore himself with naturalness and at the same time with dignity. His mien was cheerful, smiling, polite; his eyes with a gentle benignity rested on my face. His body was absolutely still. He remained thus, motionless, for perhaps a quarter of an



hour. I was feeling weak and ill; and said nothing; whereupon He smiled and said: "Silence also is conversation". After another quarter of an hour he got up and smiled a farewell. After that I certainly felt very much better. And in a little while I was well enough to go into the hall where the Maharshi sat by day and slept by night. The Maharshi was in that blissful state of meditation. A little shiver seemed to pass through me. The silence was intense and impressive. I felt that something strange was taking place that made me inclined to hold my breath. After a time I tiptoed out of the hall.

¹ Extracts from his book: *The Saint*, published by M/s. Heinemann, London.

THE SAGE AND THOUGHT¹

By

Wolter A. Keers

Q. : Why is it said that a sage does not think? How can sages write books, if they do not think?

A. : If all is thought, where is the place for a thinker? If the entire universe is name and form, and if name and form are nothing but thought, where can there be a thinker? If you project a thinker into the head, is not that thinker himself a thought? And could one thought produce other thoughts? Moreover, if that thinker could do it, the question would still remain, of who has created that thinker.

This could never be explained, unless you solve the problem by projecting the solution outside of yourself, saying that God created him.

But what is God? What is there outside of yourself? You can never know what is outside of yourself. You only know what appears in the conscious Presence that you are.

The confusion arises on account of a false distinction, made between different forms of thought. When you see a mountain, you do not call it a thought. But when the image of your deceased grandfather arises in consciousness, you do call that a thought.

Therefore, if you want to understand how things really work, you have to see first that what you call a mountain, or your own body, are also thought, and nothing but thought. They appear to you only when they appear in consciousness, and all you ever know is what appears in consciousness. You never know an object. At the most you may say that you know the perception of an object, and even that is not going far enough. You only know perception, and perception is consciousness — you might call it a movement in consciousness.

But you are that consciousness. It is nonsense to talk about your consciousness.

That 'your' itself is nothing but consciousness.

So within that consciousness that you are, I-thoughts arise and disappear, and images called a house or a street or a mountain. But each one of these images, whether you call it 'I' or anything else, is a movement within consciousness, just like a draught of air is a movement within space.

So what people call a sage or an enlightened person, is someone who has realised that from time to time within the unlimited consciousness that is the raw material of all appearances, a body-plus-world arises. This body-plus-world may be called 'mind', if you like, but it is nobody's mind. Everybody, that is to say every appearance with name and form, is part of this one appearing, including the thought 'I' and 'mine'. To talk about 'my consciousness' is just as absurd as it is for a wave to talk about 'my ocean', unless it means: the ocean of which I am a minute part, a manifestation. But are we merely a manifestation? That can never be true. We are always I-am-ness, conscious presence, in which manifestations appear and disappear. And I am not something that disappears most of the time. I am that, in which manifestations appear. I am this presence, in which, effortlessly, time and space appear when in the early morning the alarm-clock rings. But time and space are inseparable from the body-mind complex. So we might say more correctly: I am that conscious presence in which body-mind appears with its extension called sensorial perception. This sense perception is what we call 'the world': the world is nothing but a group of sense-perceptions flashing by with

¹ Parts of discussion between the author and some friends.

the speed of light, and pasted together by memory. Memory is the word for the trick — the optical or acoustical or tactile illusion — which suggests that things that succeeded each other exist simultaneously.

In the morning, when something occurs that you call 'waking up', first time appears. There is "now-ness", time to get up. After the "now-ness" you creep into the body, as it were. And when the body is there, "here-ness" has come into being.

This "now-ness" is trick number one, which suggests that the indivisible Presence can after all be divided into millions of little moments called now-now-now. That is how the illusion of time is created.

Then the second trick occurs: we project simultaneity upon a handful of such now-now-nows, and thus space is created. When you listen to music playing, you never hear more than one sound at a time. But later you claim to have heard a recital. The recital comes into being on account of the fact that memory projects simultaneity, unity, upon a limited number of successive perceptions. Exactly the same thing occurs when we talk about space. We perceive only the minutest of specks in the flashing moment of a 'now'. But memory projects hundreds and thousands of such perceptions into one image, and that is what we call space. So time and space are completely dependent on memory. Beyond memory there can be no time and no space. But it is equally true, that without time there can be no memory and no space — in fact no thought of any kind, no perceived object of whatever nature.

These things can never be separated. They are completely interdependent, like water and wetness. Therefore they are really three aspects of one thing. So instead of using the word 'maya', you may say that what we call creation is nothing but memory, appearing in the conscious presence that we are. But when memory — when an object — disappears, it is not nothing that remains over, but this conscious, witnessing presence that we are, without form, for one timeless moment, empty, as

Buddhists would say, or emptiness, in which the next perception may arise.

It is our deep-rooted superstition that, when an object disappears nothing remains, that makes us see deep sleep as a black state. For the disappearance of all objects is sleep. But sleep is not nothingness by any means. It is far less incorrect to say that it is blazing light.

On some rare occasions, for instance on a free day, you may wake up at the usual time in the morning, without the need to get up. Then you may feel the temptation very strongly to go back into deep sleep. At that moment you know quite well that the desired sleep is not a hole of black emptiness, but something most desirable, something where you feel completely at home (although you feel it without what we normally call feelings).

The sage is that most 'desirable something', light itself, without name and form or any other limitation. Only from time to time name and form appear; from time to time, light assumes form, and that form is what people call the world. When names are given to such forms, and the belief comes into being that one is a handful of such forms, an apparent prison is built at the same time. The sage is all forms, as long as they appear, and when they have disappeared, he is merely himself: light without form. One may well say that he is always Deep Sleep.

So when it is said that the sage does not think, this is said to draw your attention to the fact that a thinker is merely a thought. In the confrontation between seeker and Sought, chela and Guru, this truth must necessarily spring from the lips of the Guru, some time or the other. For if you are to get rid of illusion, it is essential for you to see that the way you define yourself — as a thinker or doer or enjoyer — is a nonsensical way. Only when this bluff has been completely exposed in brilliantly clear light, will you be able to accept it, and only then the desire to keep a thinker and a doer propped up will disappear. When that happens, your standpoints vanish. For standpoints are the babies of the projected thinker, doer or enjoyer. And only when your

standpoints have disappeared, and also the very last trace of the conviction that you know something, the ultimate reality will reveal itself. It will not do so as long as you carry other things in your head which you regard as reality. We cannot serve two masters, two conflicting realities. Truth, the Ultimate Reality, is the absolute and unconditional denial of all standpoints or convictions or beliefs or whatever else on the level of limited appearances. The realisation of the Self is the complete and unconditional non-appropriation of anything whatsoever.

As long as the impression exists that there is an 'I' that is a thinker, the tendency will continue to appropriate understanding : as a thinker you will try to understand the truth that can never be limited to — and squeezed into — a concept. So as long as this thinker has not been unmasked, you make Self-realisation impossible.

Q. : How can there be conditions for the unconditioned to appear ?

A. : There are no conditions for the Unconditioned. That is precisely why the Unconditioned will appear unknown, as long as there are conditions. And seeing yourself as a thinker or doer implies the desire to condition the Unconditionable : the desire to understand on a mental or physical level what cannot be understood as a concept or a fleeting experience.

Q. : When I hear you talk this way, I must say that it all sounds most discouraging, and Self-realisation seems far, far away.

A. : If somebody really wants self-realisation, he is not discouraged ; in fact, he will never bother about easy or difficult. What matters to him or her is a clear insight, and if this does not come on the first day, he continues the second, and if it does not come after one year, he continues the next.

If you look what a complicated world of biotechnical miracles is to be set in motion when you are to eat, you may have a depression and never eat again, complaining that you have to

set in motion so many muscles and glands and what not. But if you are hungry, you do not bother about physics and biochemistry, but you just put the food into your mouth and eat. Similarly, the person who really seeks freedom from the illusion that makes him suffer and live only a fraction of what life ought to be does not bother about easy or difficult. He listens and reads and continues until he has found, and the thought that he is doing a lot of work will not even occur to him. Every time some bit of illusion drops off, he is happy, and sadhana looks something new and fresh every day.

Q. : But sadhana you have to do !

A. : Most certainly. First you have to do a lot of hard thinking. Gradually it becomes clear that this thinking is not done by a 'you', by a thinker. You are like someone who has lost his glasses, and who is looking for them everywhere. It is only when you have searched the entire cupboard five or ten times, and then the kitchen and then the attic and the cellar and the garden, and you are absolutely certain that the glasses are not there, that you are prepared to start looking elsewhere. When you have exhausted most of the possibilities, the moment comes when you are prepared to let go your convictions that they must all the same be in the cupboard or in the kitchen, and so on. It is not unusual that then you become quite desperate, and call for help. Listening to many people who will tell you all about the price of glasses, and on how to wear glasses, and on the history of glasses during the past so many centuries, suddenly you come across someone who loves you enough to tell you that you are a fool, and that you have been able to look for your glasses only thanks to the fact that they were on your own nose all along. That moment it dawns on you that you did not have to do anything at all to get your glasses back, because you never lost them.

But the tragedy of the human being is that he is not ready to look on his own nose, until he has looked everywhere else. Sadhana is the process by which you learn, very gradually, to

watch your own nose and to stop looking elsewhere. During the period of sadhana, you are shown that, most truly, your glasses are not in the cupboard or in the kitchen or in the garden. Only after it has been proved to you time and again that they just simply cannot be here and there and elsewhere, are you prepared to look properly at the right place — not before.

Q. : We are very stupid indeed.

A. : In reality you are knowledge itself. Clear away the mechanisms of seeing as concrete what is abstract and as abstract what is concrete — that is all.

You are the only real Principle in your universe. All the rest is derived, abstracted from what you are. Just be that, and forget about the rest.

ONE-POINTED¹

By

Dilip Kumar Roy

I know my faults and flaws are countless, Lord,
 I know I have failed thee time and time again :
 But if thou turn away from me, alas,
 At whose door shall I appeal in my deep pain ?
 I have loved thee, oblivious of the world,
 Not recked its jeers, flings, bans and calumnies ;
 Virtue and sin are one to me : now mould
 My soul to thy will that thee, Lord, I may please.
 O thou, adored of Mira, come come come !
 Delay no more : play play thy Flute of bliss.
 From birth to birth I've yearned for none but thee :
 Oh how can I or thou forget, Lord, this ?
 The sun and moon give their light's kiss to all :
 From the lowliest dust to the highest peak they bless :
 Mother Ganga receives all garbage and mire
 Of towns and cities in her lap of Grace :
 How then couldst thou, O Lord of all, reject
 One who petitions thee, a derelict ?

¹ Translated from a Hindi song by Indira Devi.

BHAGAVAN: THE WAY

By

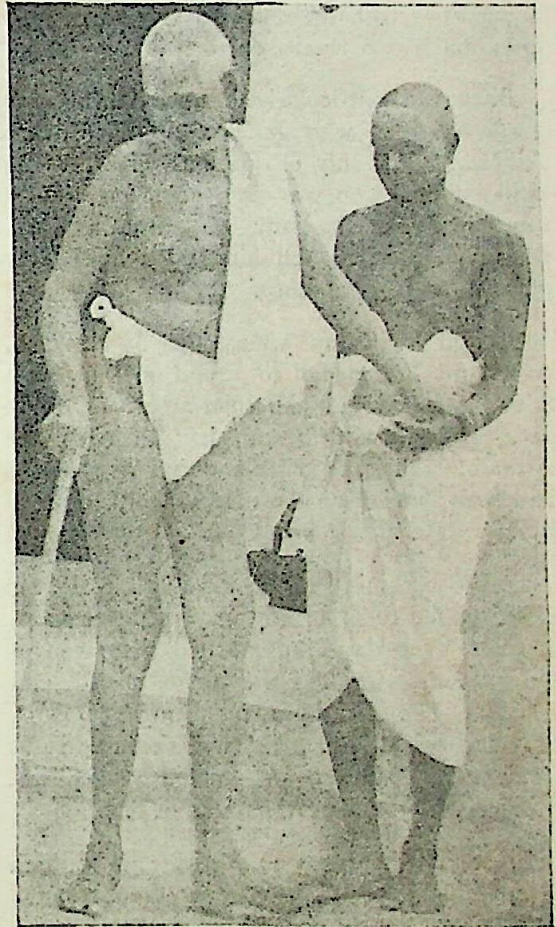
Vaikuntavasar¹

*"Out of thousands, perhaps one strives for Perfection;
out of those who strive, perhaps one knows Me as I AM"*

BHAGAVAD GITA, Ch. VII. v. 3

"**M**ANY are called but few are chosen"; many more are not even called! *Mumukshutwa* (the seeking) is a rare trait and God's grace is needed for one to become a seeker. One does not become a seeker simply by giving up attachment. The great Maharashtrian saint, Eknath, a great scholar himself, had to do *seva* (service) to his guru, Janardana Swami, for not less than forty years! The *seva* included all household jobs like washing, cleaning, fetching water and there was actually no spiritual teaching as such. Our tradition enjoins twelve years of service to the guru.

I was fully aware of what was in store for me when I went to Bhagavan. To become a *chela* I must do *seva* to Him. My whole mind was centred on this single thought. It was only in 1940 that I came to Arunachala. Actually I ran away from my house just eight days before my marriage was to take place. As there were enough *sadhus* to serve the Maharshi and I did not want to be rejected, I refrained from approaching the *Sarvadbikari*, Sri Niranjanananda Swami. I went to Palakottu where I befriended Sri Somasundara Swami. I volunteered to sit and watch the dry-fruits, nuts and other things exposed to sunlight. I did it with a plan. I knew Bhagavan was coming to Palakottu every afternoon. I spread the fruits very near where Bhagavan was passing by. I was thrilled to see Him notice my sitting there. With one-pointed care I attended to this apparently simple work. Readiness to sacrifice personal comforts for a higher cause never goes unrewarded!



Sri Vaikuntavasar with Bhagavan

Bhagavan is an embodiment of compassion and tender affection. The opportune moment

¹ An old attendant of Sri Bhagavan. He is now serving the Ashram as a Member of the Board of Trustees.

I was waiting for at last arrived. Thanks to my utter dedication to this task, I was introduced to the *Sarvadbikari*, with the useful recommendatory words that I was a sincere man devoid of family ties and perfectly dedicated to whatever work might be entrusted to me. This was put to test by him by assigning to me varied types of work, which included supervising the construction of the present hospital building, purchase of bulls and cows, rice, dal, fire-wood, etc. Whatever the job, I used to report everything to Bhagavan before undertaking it and after completing it. Every job was a success. What else could it be when His attention had been drawn to it!

Bhagavan particularly bestowed his special grace on those who undertook service of the Ashram. Not only on me, but on Sri Ramaswami Pillai, who was then going on cycle to town many times daily on Ashram work. Bhagavan used to tell him what had taken place during his absence.

Pleased with my work, the *Sarvadbikari* posted me in the Hall to attend on Bhagavan. It so happened that the chief-attendant, so to say, Sri Madhava Swami, had then left the Ashram. This responsible duty, for which I had been longing all the time, devolved on me by His grace.

Before becoming an attendant of Bhagavan I had talked to Him only once, soon after my arrival. One day I approached Bhagavan on the hill side when He was alone, placed some fruits at His feet, prostrated myself before Him and asked Him: "How is the mind to be subdued?" Bhagavan graciously replied: "Look within where the mind is".

After that there was no need for me to think of anything else. Bhagavan was God for me.

Everything I did was done with care and dedication. For instance, I used to devote considerable time to wash the only two pieces of cloth Bhagavan had (loin cloth and a small towel), rinsing them many times in water, changing the water every time. I wanted the clothes to be spotlessly clean.

Massaging His feet was another duty I welcomed. How fortunate I was! I did see, touch, talk and live with Him. Bhagavan's rheumatism gave me an opportunity to massage His feet and legs. Whenever I felt Bhagavan needed massaging I did not hesitate to do so, even when there were people around. Bhagavan not even once objected to my doing so, even though I had heard that Bhagavan had not permitted some others to do so.

Once I was sleeping in front of His Hall on bare ground. Bhagavan noticed it and asked me that night: "Why do you sleep on the floor?" His sympathetic words were elixir to me. True, I had not thought of clothes or comforts. Yet, the very next morning, Krishnaswami, another attendant, of his own accord bought for me a long yellow bed-sheet, though he had not heard of Bhagavan's enquiry the previous night.

Bhagavan often gave me tasks which others might not like. I give two instances. On great occasions like Jayanthi, Bhagavan would ask me: "Have you attended to the 'boys' (monkeys)?" I used to take plenty of food and spread it on the rocks. After some time all the monkeys would keep quiet, lying down, content, and Bhagavan would remark: "Look now, how good they all have become: do they do any mischief now?" What compassion and love! On another occasion, when all the inmates of the Ashram were at Skandashram together with Bhagavan, a grown-up Veda Pathasala boy, stung by some insect, began vomiting and swooned. Bhagavan looked at me. I understood. I carried the boy, who was almost my height, and walked down towards the Ashram. The boy was vomiting profusely. I attended on the boy, gave him first aid, and then took my bath and returned to Skandashram. The moment I stepped in, Bhagavan looked at me and enquired: "Is the boy all right?"

Though I had been rendering personal service to Bhagavan I often felt I had not done enough. So I used to take a broom and sweep the whole path up the Hill, where Bhagavan walked twice daily.

To illustrate Bhagavan's sense of humour, I relate one incident : Once there was a snake below my pillow ; and as usual I went and reported it to Bhagavan immediately. Bhagavan laughingly remarked : " Oh, it is quite all right. What else can make a better bed for you ? " ²

I shall conclude this account with a very thrilling experience.

It was round about nine one night, when Bhagavan walked towards the Hill, a little beyond the Ashram boundary. I went along

with him. There was a sand-bed between me and Bhagavan, who had gone further up in order to ease himself. Then I heard the sound of wooden sandals moving nearer and nearer towards us and passing on. There was no one to be seen, despite the sound made by the wooden sandals. I was awe-struck. I had heard from Bhagvan about the *Siddhas* living on Arunachala. I began to sweat. When Bhagavan came near me, he looked at me and said : " So, you too heard it ! "

² *Vaikuntavasar* is one of the Names of Lord Vishnu, whose bed is the huge snake, *Adishesha*.

THE INDESTRUCTIBLE

" Of the five sheaths (food, life-breath, mind, intellect and bliss), the gross body is created out of food, increasing by eating and perishing when there is none. It is the sheath of food. Compounded of skin, blood, flesh, fat, marrow, excreta, and urine, it is most filthy. It has no existence before birth or after death but appears between them. It undergoes change every moment. There is no set law governing that change. It is an object, like a pot, is insentient and has a variety of forms. It is acted upon by other forces. The Self, on the other hand, is distinct from this body and is single, eternal, and pure. It is indestructible, though the body with its limbs is destroyed. The Self is the witness who knows the characteristics of the body, its modes of activity and its three states. It is self-aware and directs the body. Such being the contrast between the body and the Self, how can the body be the Self ? The fool thinks of it as the Self. The man of wise actions with some measure of discrimination, takes body and soul together for " I ", but the really wise man, who conducts the enquiry with firm discrimination, knows himself always as the Supreme Brahman, the Being which is of its own nature. The " I am the body " idea is the seed of all sorrow. Therefore, just as you do not identify yourself with your shadow body, image body, dream body, or the body that you have in your imagination, cease also to associate the Self in any way with the body of skin, flesh and bones. Make every effort to root out this error and, holding fast to the knowledge of Reality as the Absolute Brahman, destroy the mind and obtain supreme Peace. Then you will have no more birth."

— SANKARA in *Vivekachudamani*

THE ONLY REALITY

By
Gladys Dehm

CARL JUNG was a unique genius whose quest into the 'inner man' was to carry him through the 'dark' and 'light' existing in every individual.

God was present within his very soul, 'as evident as an object falling upon one's head' — so clear and plain His Presence was.

With his brilliant intellect Jung had no qualms about discussing the soul, which he attributed to all warm-blooded animals as well as to people.

It would require volumes to deal with the subjects he undertook to study, alchemy, religions, traditions and beliefs, rituals of primitive peoples and so on. He read widely — Pythagoras, Plato, Empedocles, Heraclitus, St. Thomas of Aquinas, too many to quote. One writer however impressed him with his 'life-force', *Meister Eckhart*, the mystic.

Many branded him a braggart, a fake. Others too like him have experienced the hostility provoked by such genuine fire, by thoughts springing like arrows from within, discharged by the power of true conviction. How often have great teachers been thus taught to keep silent and refrain from further efforts at communication.

Jung learnt to remain silent about 'God's World', but he continued to consider God the most evident of all experiences.

In the course of his studies Jung came upon vivisection — a practice he considered unnecessary and barbaric. His compassion for animals stemmed from his identity, instinctive though it may be, with them.

The emotions were very important to Jung. He knew that the intellectual suffers a neurosis if his feelings remain stunted. He could not understand how philosophers could 'consider God as a type of hypothesis, an idea, which

could be discussed'. Jung did not consider it possible to 'prove the existence of God' — that was an immediate and definite *experience*. He also wondered why the theologians did not dwell on the 'dark' aspect of Divinity.

Once again, this great man, pursuing his quest to unearth truth as experiences revealed themselves to him, underwent what other seekers know only too well, Isolation. The knowledge that there is no manner of communicating one's inner experiences to others — this isolation — can be very hard to bear.

The true alchemist, so Jung discovered, was one who transformed base metals into a 'spiritualised gold'. Here, the spiritual was made to emerge. Thus the task of alchemy became clear to Jung and carried him further onwards towards 'discovering' the hidden and the unrecognised. In alchemy too, Jung realized that both feminine and masculine principles were equally balanced.

Pope Pius XII in his Papal Bull did likewise when Mary, Mother of Wisdom, is assumed into her heavenly role.

The intellectual who has not understood that he possesses a soul is lost indeed.

Sri Ramana Maharshi once remarked how fortunate he had been to have been spared 'too much addiction to thinking'. How concisely and clearly expressed.

It is customary for intellectuals to say: 'How do you know that God exists? You have no trained mind as we have; you are simply repeating something which was taught to you as a child. Have you read the works of . . . ' and we are given a list of high-sounding names.

If you dare to mention 'other' great thinkers who believed in God, you are immediately told: 'That is the trouble with you. You only read *them*'. (Jung is one of them)

Sad beyond belief it is that this should be so.

When Carl Jung once conversed with a Pueblo Indian he was told that 'Westerners were mad'. Upon being asked why, he answered that whereas they, the Pueblos, think with their hearts, Westerners think with their heads. What a revealing, shattering, statement. Yet, it is the sad truth.

Westerners call those who depart this world the 'dead'. Among the Sioux Indians they were called 'the ever-living ones'. These Sioux had no volumes to turn to, but they believed in Wakon Tonka — 'He Who is the Great Mysterious One'.

A beautiful prayer was once uttered by a holy man (Sioux) and recorded: 'O Great Wakon Tonka, give me knowledge of how to place my feet upon the soft ground, a parent to all that lives. Grant me the power to understand and give me clear vision. Come to my aid, for without you, I am indeed nothing'.

In recording the love of Wakon Tonka, which the Sioux held sacred in his heart, we come to think of Carl Jung's Quest — his life-long search for the Vision of mind and heart or psyche.

In Mexico, in a frenzy of destruction the Spaniards burnt the holy books and other literature of the 'enemy'.

Few fragments remained however, and from these like soft echoes of a long forgotten past we read: 'Recall always that you must remain close to God who is everywhere — He remains unseen and impalpable. Give unto Him yourselves body and heart, and see that pride does not reside within your heart. Give not way to despair, neither to cowardice of spirit, but remain humble in your hearts — and always place your trust in God . . . and although you be humbled, answer 'no word but remain silent . . .'

Life to these inhabitants of Mexico was 'a place of peril, toil and fear. Traps are set to ensnare you, take care not to fall into any of these dangers . . . there are sins which rend and tear the soul . . . by thy own misdoing

thou hast become defiled — but enter the Heart of Mercy, and our Lord God who protects and keeps us in safety, will cleanse the stain from your soul — thou shalt know rebirth . . .'

The gentle words of a Toltec midwife recalls the beautiful quality which once resided in a wise people. To the newborn baby was said: 'Understand, O well-loved child, that thy home is not here. This place where thou art is but a nest — here thou shalt blossom forth — thy true home is not here . . .'. Again: 'O valuable jewel — thou comest from the great heavens — thy parents are celestial — Our Lord has put into this dust a valuable gem and a feather which is rich indeed'.

The intellect is an excellent tool. But, Dante wisely made Virgil (reason) give the seeker over to Beatrice (Heavenly Beatitude).

It is good to probe and analyse for some, because that is their destiny. Others smile, they may be illiterate, and yet they will place a hand upon their heart and say simply: 'I Know'.

Swami Vivekananda made use of his forceful intellect to reach Sri Ramakrishna's Haven.

What is required is the meeting of heart and mind.

Within myself is darkness and light. We must have the courage to face this.

The terrible thing which is happening to the world is that it is looking 'outside' instead of 'inside' for heaven. (Naturally to one who *knows* — heaven is everywhere).

Nations become distrustful of one another because individuals do not trust one another. How can individuals trust one another when they do not even understand themselves?

The Mahatma taught and practised Non-violence, 'soul-force'. Who hears his Heavenly Song today?

Sri Ramana Maharshi tells man to hunt down this myth — the personality we call the 'I' (the 'me').

May we continue hunting down this 'I' until it becomes the 'nothing' it really is.

There is only One Reality, One Being, GOD.

The Whence and Whither of Human Pilgrimage

By

Antony Elenjimmittam

LIFE and death, as we know them, are not fortuitous. Life is a meaningful pilgrimage of man to the lap of the Eternal: it is a trust from Heaven with the command to steer our tiny barge of life across the storm-tossed world of light and darkness, virtue and vice, health and sickness and other dual throngs, to pilot the ship right through the raging waves of the ocean of *samsāra* without a shipwreck, without capsizing and then take it across and anchor it in the harbour of Peace Eternal.

Our pilgrimage continues through many lives until the pilgrim, who has lost his way, finds it back and returns to the Home of our Father in Heaven back to the lap of AUM, this reverberating sound of the Soundless One. The ruler of the universe gives us chance after chance to mend our ways, to purify our minds, so that we could see this universe as it really is, and not as it appears to our five senses and the empirical sciences based on sense perception.

When the pilgrim has disciplined himself sufficiently through self-knowledge and self-purification, comes nearer to the threshold of the cosmic Self, the Oversoul, the inner Atman who is identical with Brahman, then we get glimpses into our own past peregrinations from womb to womb, from the trackless jungles of worldly life, misery, which is our lot when we live in isolation from the life of the cosmos, banished from the shores of immortality, exiled from our heavenly paradise. We are hurled back to the wheel of empirical life in order to expiate for our ignorance, avidya, in the past life, to cleanse us of all dross and sins, and thus become so immaculately pure and resplendent as to be reunited with the essence of all beings, with God our Father, with the Self of the Universe. This writer himself has felt it many a time in the heart of his heart

that he was reborn to come back to the Vedic gnosis of *Tatvamasi*, for in a former life he was born a Brahmin, but he did not realise the meaning of that birth and did not understand the real meaning of a Brahmin as one who has known Brahman. In that birth he did not understand the meaning of the Vedic teaching: *Brāhmavid brāhmaiva bhavati* — one who knows Brahman becomes one with Brahman. Now I am born of Christian parents to learn the superficiality of popular Christianity and the church versions of the message of Christ, and then go deeper into the heart of esoteric Christianity, the spirituality of the Essenes — the monastic Jewish group of which Christ himself was a member and exponent. The knowledge of deeper Christianity as understood by the Essenic Christians, the Greek Fathers of the desert, the authors of *Filocalia*, brought me back to the bedrock of Vedanta and Yoga of India, which finally gave rest to the transmigrating pilgrim and brought heart-union with all forms of religious realisations, from the grossest anthropomorphism to the subtlest advaita vedanta. Yet, my pilgrimage has not ended. By heaven's decree I am called upon to work as a Karma Yogin, to carry as many souls as I can to the ultimate goal.

"Life is real, life is earnest, and the grave is not its goal. Dust thou art, to dust returnest, was not spoken of the soul", sang Longfellow in his *Psalm of Life*. We are not here by chance, nor are we merely a combination of atoms emerged from Nature for a while only to disappear into the thin air. We are here with a purpose. Our life is pregnant with meaning. To discover this meaning is the purpose of introspective meditation. Withdrawing ourselves from sense-bound perceptions and sentiments, we should see ourselves as we really are. This is self-knowledge.

Whence, then, do we come ? Whither do we go ? How are we to reach our home, which is AUM ? These are the fundamental questions of every pilgrim. Strictly, according to karmic laws of retributive justice, we are given chance after chance to free ourselves of our ignorance. Ignorance or avidya is the seed, and wrong thoughts, words, deeds of commission and omission are the flowers and fruits. Inversely, knowledge, gnosis, Jnana is the seed, while virtue, enlightenment, emancipation are the fruits of such a divine seed within us implanted by the very hands of our creator, God, who through His power of Māyā, creates, preserves and dissolves everything in the universe. Māyā is not mere illusion ; it is the creative power of God as well. Creation is not producing something out of nothing. Creation is only the remanifestation of names and forms on the ocean of life. As Sankara puts it :

“ By the term creation we understand the manifestation of names and forms on the Sat-Chit-Ananda (Truth, Knowledge and Bliss), the Supreme Being, like the foam that is formed in an ocean.”

— *Drik Drisya Viveka*, xx.14.

Creation is possible only through Māyā, the power to manifest the Universe on Reality, that is Brahman. Through the two-fold power of veiling the Reality and projecting the pictures of creation, empirical life goes on in the cycles of creation and dissolution, until enlightenment dawns, when the many disappear into the One, without a second, *ekamevādvitīyam*. It is then resplendent luminosity, immortality and blessedness, all peace and tranquillity.

We fall victims of the projecting veiling power of Māyā, of the *vikshepa shakti* and

avarana shakti of the illusory world as long as we take the world, of time and space as real and are quite unaware of the Supreme Reality, Brahman, the One Self of all.

Whence do we all come ? From God, our Father, the Atman who is the Oversoul of all souls, from Brahman, the only Reality behind the universe. Whither do we go ? What is the goal of this earthly pilgrimage ? Back to the bosom of our Father from whom we got ourselves cut off through ignorance, which has engendered a transient reflection of the Eternal Self as our individual self, a shadow of the Supreme Oversoul, the Paramatma, in the individualised ego, jiva, the jivatma. How do we free ourselves from this prison-house of self and selfishness with all its concomitant vices like lust, covetousness, gluttony, greed, anger, envy and sloth ? By rejoining the ocean whence we, as rivers and rivulets, emanated.

Up, then, brother, on to the skies, back to the lap of the Eternal Love, that is God, in you and me. Bestir, sister, you are not a daughter of Adam and Eve, you are a child of immortal Bliss. Reach thither. That is our goal.

“ Listen, O children of immortal Bliss, all of you dwelling in heavenly mansions. I have known that Supreme Purusha, transcending the reach of all darkness like the resplendent sun. It is by knowing Him alone that you are freed from the clutches of death, and to guide us back Home, there is no other way.”

The Vedic seers sang thus, because they understood the whence and whither of the human pilgrimage. This should serve us as the Pole Star !

DIRECT PERCEPTION

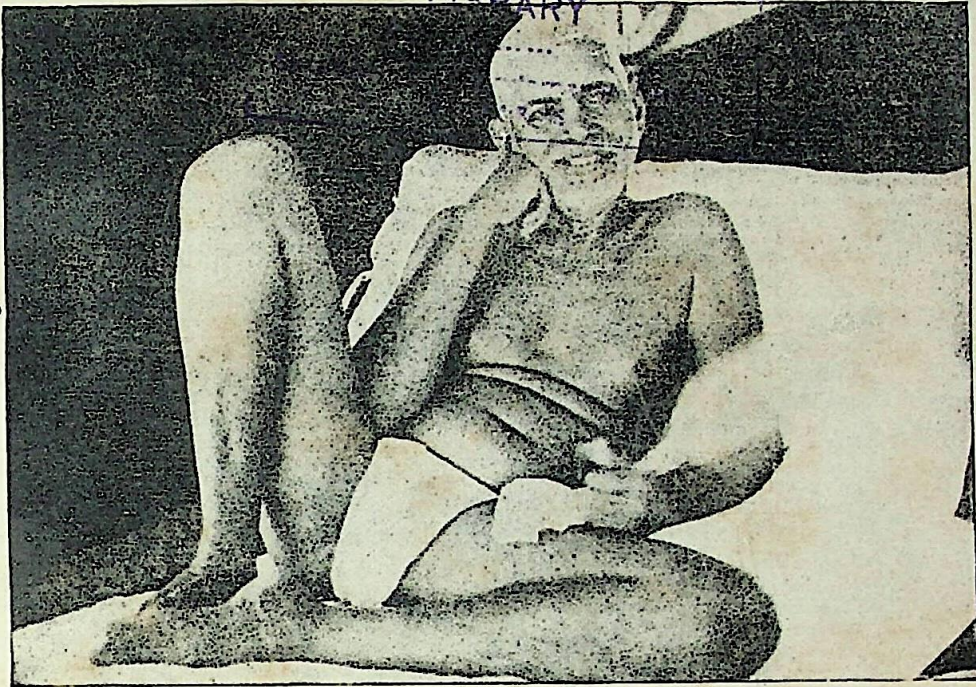
By
Selvarajan Yesudian

IF Swami Vivekananda's message to humanity burst like a bombshell, widening a confined circle of man's religious outlook to infinity itself, Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi's message enters a particular phase of man's life when he is ripe to receive it and realise its profound significance. "Mother, wake me when I am hungry", said the child. "Don't worry, my child, hunger will wake you" said the mother smiling. When one has dropped off all the paraphernalia in one's quest for truth, and is prepared to embark alone on the greatest of all adventures, — to take heaven by storm, only then does one really understand Bhagavan's abstract art of simplicity. "How could I conquer the mind?" asked someone of Bhagavan. "When the Self is realised, there is no mind to conquer", came *the* precise reply. A Chinese emperor ordered a painting of a rooster. The artist promised to have the painting ready in three years. He sent word to the emperor that the painting was finally ready. When the emperor entered the artist's studio, he was surprised to see nothing but an empty canvas. With a brush in hand, the artist went to the canvas and with two strokes, he conjured the true likeness of a rooster. The emperor was on the one hand amazed at the skill of the painter, and on the other hand, was angry that he was kept waiting all these years. When an explanation for this impudence was demanded, the artist led the emperor to a large hall with hundreds of paintings of the rooster, from one with the minutest details of the bird to one with nothing but a couple of lines which was *the* rooster. The monarch rewarded the artist for his exceptional talent. Bhagavan's words are the essence and quintessence of **Truth**. He makes one feel at home in his own faith, be he a Mohamedan, a Christian, a Hindu, a Buddhist or a Jew. He makes one

realise that none of the great religions of the world taught Mohamedism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Judism, but they all proclaimed **Truth**, just **Truth**.

If the warrior Vivekananda heroically proclaimed that: "The old religion taught that he who did not believe in God is an atheist, but the new religion teaches that he who does not believe in himself is an atheist", then Bhagavan's crystal clear message runs: "No learning or knowledge of the Scriptures is necessary to know the Self . . . All knowledge has only to be given up eventually as not-Self. Nor is household work or care of children necessarily an obstacle. If you can do nothing more, at least continue saying 'I, I' to yourself mentally all the time, whatever work you may be doing and whether you are sitting, standing or walking. 'I' is the Name of God. It is the first and greatest of all *mantras*. Even OM is second to it". If the seat of the **Self** is in man, if the **Self** is all-conscious, all-knowing, and almighty, why should we look for a solution for our problems outside ourselves and not in the all-conscious and all-knowing **Self** within? As Bhagavan puts it: "If you know your reality first, you will be able to know the reality of the world. It is a strange thing that most people do not care to know about their own reality, but are very anxious to know about the reality of the world. You realise your own **Self** first and then see if the world exists independently of you and is able to come and assert before you its reality or existence".

Bhagavan's teachings appeal to the practical mind of the West. At our Yoga Summer School in Ponte Tresa, Switzerland, attended by students from all parts of the world from June to September each year, the simple and



direct approach to Truth taught by Bhagavan is what appeals most. From the simple minded worker to the academically trained brain, the impact of Bhagavan's words is powerful, for **Truth** is accessible to them all. "Renunciation and realisation are the same. They are different aspects of the same state. Giving up the non-self is renunciation. Inhering in the Self is jnana or Self-realisation. One is the negative and the other the positive aspect of the same, single Truth. Bhakti, jnana, yoga — are different names for Self-realisation or

mukti which is our real nature. These appear as the means first. They eventually are the goal. So long as there is conscious effort required on our part to keep up bhakti, yoga, dhyana, etc., they are the means. When they go on without any effort on our part, we have attained the Goal. There is no realisation to be achieved. The Real is ever as it is. What we have done is, we have realised the unreal, i.e., taken for real the unreal. We have to give up that. That is all that is wanted. The **Self** alone exists".

THAT

.....

By
L. P. Yandell

How ? Who ? When ?
What — is That ?
That is the question.
This is the answer !
Ah, **THIS !**



When the five
petal blue
Flower flax
waves many
arms

and the tall
garlic clumps
poke the summer
up

who would suppose the white snow

clouding

On dusty road we meet
the old chinaman wei wu wei
"good day" I say
"no good no bad no day" he say
"yes I know that" I reply
"I've read your books
ex-plaining all this away
only you don't ex-plain the
explainer"
"I've explained that to you too
a dozen times" he murmurs
"just once moar" I beg
He begins to ex-plain
crowd gathers I pass hat
we have a sumptuous dinner
among the guests present were
Buddha Jesu Huang the po and
believe it or not
you

tree
as it
appears
to
sparrows

roof of
pagoda

Find key word slowly
re-member this word
s l o w l y
so slow on down until
you come so
miraculously
h e r e

dusty road

rocks
strolling
slowly

reps

Some Early Taoist Thought

By
Murdoch Kirby

She : There are some sayings in the *Tao Te Ching* which must be hard to explain. I would like to know how a sage could possibly have written Chapter 19 :

“Banish learning, and grief will not be known.

Banish sageliness, discard wisdom and the people will benefit a hundredfold.

Banish benevolence, discard righteousness and the people will return to filial duty and paternal affection.

Banish cleverness, discard profit and there will be no more thieves and bandits.”

He : Certainly it does not sound like a lover of Wisdom. Nevertheless we must have a look at it. In this case, usually for the *Tao Te Ching*, it is not a disconnected saying but follows on from the previous Chapter 18. But before looking at that we will take a look at the setting of these early Chinese thinkers. The periods during which they lived are now known as the Spring and Autumn period, 722 to 481 B.C. and the Warring States period, 403 to 221 B.C.

The *Tao Te Ching* was written down right at the end of this time, though it contains sayings from the whole period since Confucius (550 to 479 B.C.). The Spring and Autumn period saw the downfall of the Chou dynasty. The feudal and vassal States were growing stronger and more independent, with the princes striving for domination : as well, dozens of small kingdoms emerged. Eventually seven stronger States gained the mastery and, during the Warring States period, they were contending for leadership. This period ended with the victory of the Ch'in State, the foundation of the Empire and the First Emperor.

During the whole of the 500 years, there had been continual uprisings and strife. Each small State had its scholar advisers, some followers of Confucius, some of Shang Yang, the Legalist, and some of other independent thinkers. Others, such as Yang Chu, about 450 to 380 B.C., considered there was a better chance of staying alive by not taking sides. Yang Chu is quoted by Mencius as having said ‘Each for himself. I would not give a single hair to save the whole world’ ; he is also described by Han Fei Tzu as one who ‘despises things and values life’.

She : Was, then, the writer of our Chapter 19 blaming the scholars who were advising the princes for all that unrest ? Should he not really blame the ambition of the princes ?

He : Perhaps he was not blaming the men so much as the situation behind it all. Let us look at Chapter 18 now.

“It was when the Great Tao declined that there appeared benevolence and righteousness.

It was when knowledge and intelligence arose that there appeared hypocrisy.

It was when the six family relationships lost their harmony that there was talk of filial piety and paternal affection.

It was when the country fell into chaos and confusion that there was talk of loyalty and trustworthiness.”

She : Wait a minute. Let me go through that slowly. When people no longer lived according to the Tao, then there was talk of benevolence and righteousness — that was Confucius. When knowledge and wisdom come, then hypocrisy appears. It is only when

respect in the family dies that there is talk of the correct family relationships. It is only when the country is in chaos that there is talk of patriotism. Is that it? Is he saying that these teachers of morality are just a symptom of what is wrong and that we would be better without them? Is he right?

He : Well . . . He was right at that time because it was believed then that in the past there had been a Golden Age, an age when everyone had been simple, natural, honest, kind and unselfish : since then human behaviour had degenerated and restraints and rules had become necessary. In that setting he was right in what he said.

She : I think he was just stating his opinion on the situation rather than suggesting a remedy for it.

He : But don't forget that it was a Taoist belief that people would be happier if they followed the direction of their own inner nature, rather than rules from outside.

She : Are there any other sayings from that unsettled period?

He : There is one which comes very close to what we know of Yang Chu. It is Chapter 44.

"Fame or Life, which is dearer?
Life or Wealth, which is worth more?
Profit or Loss, which hurts most?
The meanest pays most in the end.
Who hoards most suffers most loss.
Who is content need fear no shame.
Who knows to stop incurs no blame.
Long shall he live."

She : That does sound like one who despised things and valued life. Now one final question : my version of the *Tao Te Ching* is quite different from yours.

He : That often happens. The Chinese written characters do not translate into precise words of any other language ; they represent ideas and quite a variety of translations are justifiable. For instance in some versions of Chapter 44 the contrast between 'Fame or the Self', 'The Self or Wealth' is drawn instead of physical life.

PRIMAL REALITY

By

Ka. Kavana

Through to the end of Cause,
shall we come to the Primal State?
Is there a zero point of infinity ;
a motionless state of motion ;
an all moving state of Rest,
quietude or Stillness?
What mark has the Universal Mind
upon its brow?
Does not the ultimate Tao
become the most marked reality
for everything?

exceeding the limit may issue in
the limitless,
yet excess may exhaust the limited.
Can the limited embrace the void
of the unlimited . . .
as the moulding of a vase
would define a space?
Space is unlimited,
but that which exists in space
is limited by its own nature.

STORIES FROM YOGA VASISHTHA—XII

STORY OF THE VETALA

Translated from Sanskrit by
M. C. Subramanian

VASISHTHA said to Rama : Abandon all fancies ; remove the dirt of desires ; become a man of sleep-like silence (*sushupta-maunavan*) ; let Brahman be your support.

Rama asked : O king of silent sages ! I know the silence which is abstention from speech (*vangmaunam*) and the silence which is similar to that of an inert object (*kashtba-maunam*). But what is meant by sleep-like silence ? Please tell me.

Vasishtha replied : There are two kinds of silent recluses, say the great sages. One is the recluse who remains still like an inert object (*kashtba tapasvi*), the other is the person who is liberated even while living (*jivanmukta*). The former has no conception of Brahman. He merely practises rigorously and mechanically (some discipline like breath-control). He controls his senses forcibly. The latter knows the world as it truly is. He has realized that he is Brahman and is constantly aware of the Self. He may appear to be an ordinary man, but (unlike an ordinary man, he will be inwardly content. He is the silent sage (*muni*) who has attained liberation. The experience of both kinds of munis who have become calm and achieved steadiness of mind is called silence (*mauna*). Abstention from speech is verbal silence (*vang maunam*), abstention from bodily movements is silence of the inert (*kashtba maunam*). As the minds of those who practise these two kinds of silence are full of desires, they are suitable only for those who practise austerities mechanically (*batba tapas*). The silence which requires no effort or regulation, which does not involve distinctions and which may or not be accompanied by meditation is called sleep-like silence (*sushuptamaunam*). Realizing the true nature of this world of multiplicity and remaining thereafter free from doubts is called

sleep-like silence. Realizing that this extensive world is Siva (Brahman) who appears as a multiplicity of souls and being always mindful of it is called sleep-like silence.

Space appears to exist, but does not (truly) exist. Everything appears to exist, but nothing (truly) exists. Realizing this fact and remaining calm and equanimous is sleep-like silence. Those who are well-versed in Yoga achieve sleep-like silence in two ways, either by the way of knowledge (*sankhya*) or by the way of yoga. Sankhya yogis are those who have become enlightened through true knowledge and the samadhi which follows it. The Yoga Yogis are those who have, through special practices, controlled the breath and the vital airs and attained the state without beginning or end which is free from cares. The goal of both is the attainment of a natural state of quietude. The state which one attains through knowledge is the same as that which is achieved through Yoga. The supreme state is that in which thoughts and the breath, freed from the latent tendencies, subside. The mind, though unreal, seems to exist when one does not think deeply. It is like one dreaming that one is dead. It will be found to be non-existent if one thinks about it. Constant practice of one method, control of breath and control of mind are in short what is called liberation (*moksha*). When one achieves one of these the other two become easy. Just as sesame seeds and oil or flowers and their fragrance depend upon each other, so also mind and breath are interdependent. They are like a container and the contained. When one ceases to exist the other also comes to an end. The two together produce liberation by their own extinction. One should adopt a recognized method and practise it regularly until one actually experiences what one knows (intel-

lectually). When the mind is concentrated upon something it becomes that immediately. If one concentrates for a long time on what is absolutely unconditional (Brahman) one will become that.

Now listen to some questions raised by a Vetala (a malignant spirit) about the dream-like delusion of samsara which have just come to my memory. There was a big Vetala on the Vindhya mountains. It once went to a certain town in search of something to eat. It had been living previously in another town where it used to receive sacrifices and other offerings liberally. It never ate any one whom it came across without sufficient reason. Nor would it, however hungry it might be, eat one who was sinless, for the learned are always just. Once, being hungry, it left its haunts in the forest and went (as stated above) to a city to find some human being who would become its just prey. There it came across the king of the city who had come out (in disguise) at night to inspect the city personally. It spoke to him in a fearful voice : O king ! you have fallen into my hands ; I am a big Vetala. Where are you going ? You are lost ; you will become my food.

At this the king said : O you Spirit who roam at night ! If you eat me unjustly your head will undoubtedly break into a thousand pieces.

The Vetala said : I will not eat you unjustly. I am always just. You are a king and should, therefore, fulfil the desires of everybody. You must comply with my request and answer the following questions :

1. Which is the Sun the tiny atoms of whose rays are these universes ?
2. Which is the air in which the great heavens fly about like particles of dust ?
3. Who is it that does not lose his lustre even after passing from one dream to another hundreds and thousands of times, every time forgetting the previous dreams ?
4. Just as the stem of a plantain tree is only layer after layer of leaves (broad stalks) so also all parts of all beings are only one being. Who is that being ?

5. The universe and the Meru Mountains on the Sun form the tinier particles of a tiny particle, without losing their fragmentary nature. Which is that particle ?
6. The three worlds which are like the closely packed interior of a stone are the tiny fragments of a mountain's parts. Which is that mountain ?

On hearing these questions the king smiled and said :

1. It is the Sun of Consciousness which illumines everything. This Self of Consciousness is the great Sun which animates all beings.
2. These numerous worlds are the tiny particles of that same great Sun of Consciousness. They come into existence through it and are revealed by its luminosity.
3. Time, space, motion are all Consciousness. This is the sacred (air). The five elements are the particles which fly about in the air of Consciousness like fragrance in a flower. They are existent as well as non-existent.
4. It is Brahman which, without losing its nature of extreme tranquillity, passes from one dream to another in this great dream called the world.
5. Just as the stem of a plantain tree is only layer after layer of leaf stalks, so also this wonderful world is only Brahman through and through.
6. The Supreme Self is like an extremely tiny particle as it is imperceptible and difficult to realize. As it is infinite it is the source of the Meru Mountain, etc. The latter are like tiny particles compared to it. At the same time this extremely tiny being is like a great mountain because he is all-pervading and difficult to grasp. Although he appears to possess limbs he has (really) none. As he is pure Consciousness and is the substratum of all, the three worlds are like his interior organs. They exist in Consciousness.

On hearing these words of the king which showed that he was a thoughtful and Self-realized man, the Vetala became quiet. It retreated to a solitary place and, unmindful of its hunger, began to meditate continuously.

(To be continued)

EVERY SENTIENT BEING

By
Wei Wu Wei

Being, I AM. Every sentient-phenomenon expresses it incessantly, cannot not express it, but is conditioned not to know it.
 'Not-knowing' is identification as 'a me', often termed 'ignorance'.
 'Knowing' is disidentification, whereby I remain as I, once termed 'gnosis'.
 This is why 'Knowing is Being' — as Maharshi stated.
 'Being' is the 'being' of 'being-sentient', and whatever is 'being' I AM.
 Extension in space-time is experience, called 'suffering' in Buddhism, called 'living' by others,
 and consists of identification with a phenomenal object.
 This constitutes bondage to Relativity.
 Disidentification is recovery of Awareness of BEING,
 whereby identification with a phenomenal 'me' is discarded,
 so that every sentient-being can say : '*Being, I AM.*'

N. B. : 'Awareness' implies 'Subjective Consciousness' of which Sri Ramana spoke when he said "The world is only in Subjective Consciousness."

LET THE FLUTE REST

By
G. M. Timosak

Paul reps
 Dear
 O Wei Wu Wei
 Let the flute rest
 Take up the Quest
 Quiet
 Feel
 The Unmanifest.

How I Came to Bhagavan

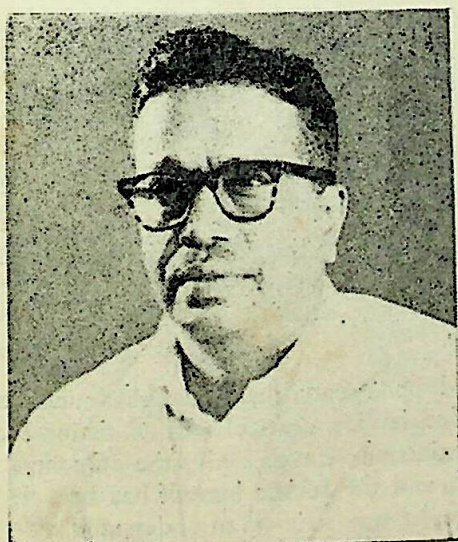
By

K. V. Balakrishna Menon

"**E**VERYTHING is afraid of Time but Time itself is afraid of the Pyramids", so goes an old saying about the Pyramids of Egypt. Thus defying Time there stands in the remote sun-baked town of Tiruvannamalai, the Hill which for ages has attracted Saints and Seers, the latest of whom is Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. It is said that those who meditate on Arunachala in their hearts will lose the ego, the besetting 'original sin' of mankind.

Way back in 1937, I was doing my B.A. in the American College, Madurai. One day I happened to go to the house of my professor, Sri N. R. Krishnamurti Iyer¹ in Adimoolam Pillai Agraharam, Madurai, and I had the first introduction to the Saint of Arunachala whose portrait adorned the front room.

In 1939, due to some traumatic experience, I came to Sri Ramanasramam without informing my parents. My father got scent of it.



Sri K. V. Balakrishna Menon



Before he reached the Ashram I went to Anandashram of Swami Ramdas where he picked me up. Later on I learnt that my father had sent a telegram from Sri Ramanasramam to Swami Ramdas, reading 'Detain my son Balakrishnan, Confidential', and that the telegram was sent with the knowledge of Sri Bhagavan. My only satisfaction is that thus I was instrumental in my father getting the *darshan* of Bhagavan.

I belong to a Hindu family of north Malabar, following the old, now obsolete

¹ Introduced to our readers in our January, 1973 issue, p. 52.

matrilineal custom. All the heads of my family (Karnavans) were hereditary village Menons (revenue collectors) and were pious and religious. So by nature and temperament I took to spirituality. Being a student of Sanskrit, I started reading the scriptures. But nothing gave me solace.

So in 1949, I came to Arunachala once again. Till the passing away of Bhagavan I used to sit for hours on end before Him. I lost my abundant vanity and pride. I became humble and unassuming.

After the *Nirvāṇa* of Bhagavan I became a teacher. By now, thinking of Bhagavan had

become spontaneous with me. I retired as Headmaster of a Government High School in North Arcot District. By His Grace I got a State Award also.

At present I am back in Arunachala, a religious recluse. By Bhagavan's Grace my peace of mind was throughout unaffected by the trials and anxieties that fell to my lot.

While once sitting in meditation before Sri Bhagavan I had the most enduring satisfaction when he asked me : "Have you had your food?"

Have I not?

THE BEING

By
Ira

What is the experience of the True Being? This is a question always being asked by those who encounter someone in whose presence such an interest is evoked.

Can they ever get a straight answer? The True Being himself is not inclined to answer for he does not want to prove anything to anyone.

Indeed for such a One the question implies the existence of someone in ignorance of the Truth and since he sees only awareness, only consciousness absolute, there is no ignorance for him and therefore no questions either.

He knows that for those who raise questions there must be an object perceived by them from which they hope to receive an answer, and that object is undoubtedly his (the sage's) body and what the seeker considers to be his mind.

Therefore, any description given by the sage of his "experience" will be foisted by the hearer onto the form before him so that he will think; 'He experiences the Absolute in such and such a way.'

The truth is, there is no one to experience the Absolute. There is only the Absolute, and no experience of it.

He knows that the only way to understand the True Being is to BE That itself, for then all questions are answered.

Understanding this, his replies to the seeker are likely to be themselves questions turning the mind upon itself in enquiry as to its own nature.

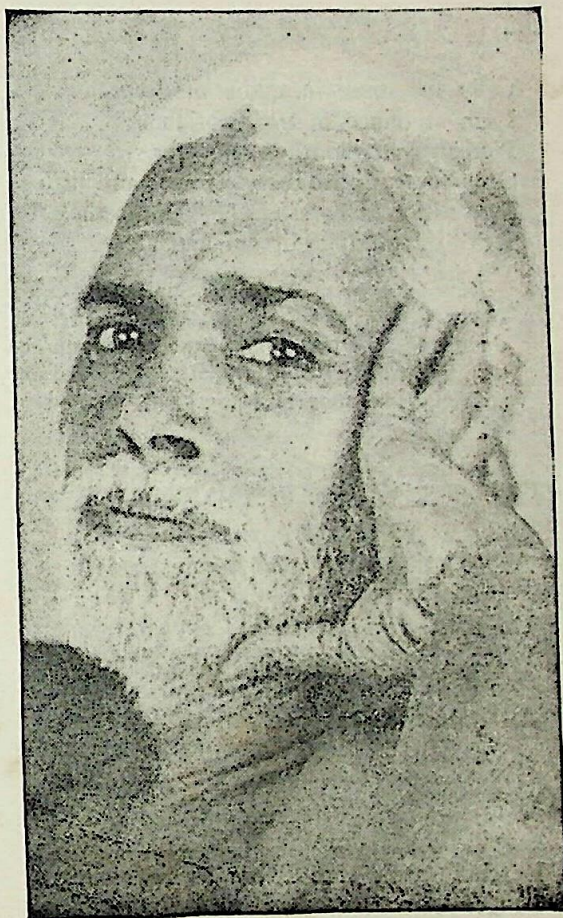
And upon enquiring thus, the mind itself will flee having always been a fiction; and its extinction leaves only the Oneness of Being, and the seeker himself has become the Nature he was striving to understand.

THE RAMANA UPANISHAD

By

Prof. N. A. Nikam

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI was asked : "Is solitude necessary for a *sannyasin* ?" He replied : "Solitude is in the mind of a man . . . a detached man is always in solitude". If this is the case, then solitude is independent of the environment and is not, necessarily, an attribute of the *sannyasi*. Who is a *sannyasi* ? Or, what is *sannyasa* or renunciation ? Renunciation of the world or renunciation of the ego ? For, there is a fundamental distinction between the two. A man detached from the world may not be, necessarily, detached from the ego. "Does not renunciation mean renunciation of possessions ?" Ramana Maharshi was asked. And he replied, "Renunciation of the 'possessor' too." One who is detached from the world may *appear* to be detached from the ego, but may, in fact, use the world that he has renounced through the ego that he has not renounced. Spiritual life has its appearances and its illusions. He that seems detached from the world finds it necessary to assume an outward symbol or garb, and his is a negation of life, world and action. Whereas, he that is detached from the ego does not find it incompatible to live in the world and work to 'save' the world. But he that is detached from the ego has no outward symbol or garb. The symbol of his renunciation of ego is *conscious* silence. And the practice of conscious silence is not an attribute of any *asrama* or stage in the life of the individual. And he that goes into conscious silence is not required to 'profess' or 'refute' a religion. He has transcended all 'religions', and expounds in silence or through silence the truth he seeks or has found. You can *be* in conscious silence in whatever you do, and do whatever you do without the intervention of the ego. Conscious silence is a Way to the 'source' of one's



Being. And to be in conscious silence is to *be*. The 'source' to which conscious silence goes self-directed is an *experience* in the Heart. This experience is the 'source' of all the Scriptures. Therefore the 'source' of one's Being and the 'source' of all the Scriptures is the same. The Mystic expounds this truth in silence. This is the teaching of the *Ramana Upanishad*, as we may call Ramana Maharshi's writings.

Garland of Guru's Sayings

By SRI MURUGANAR

Translated from Tamil by

Prof. K. Swaminathan

567.

Only for those incapable of deep,
Firm abidance in *turiya* bright
Piercing even darkest slumber,
Only for such are there a fourth and fifth —
Two different — states of being in the gross
Series of waking, dream and sleep.

(Compare verse 32 of the Supplement to the
Forty Verses, which denies the difference between
turiya and *turiyatita*, between a fourth and
a fifth state. The truth is that *turiya* is the one
and only real state of Being.)

568.

Only so long as 'I' exists —
An 'I' that sleeps and dreams and
wakes —
Do these various 'states' appear.
When by self-enquiry this created
Ego ends, then with it ends
All difference between states of Being.

569.

One who has through supreme devotion
Reached one's true Being as Awareness
Cannot by nature recognize
Any state except this State
Of being one supreme Awareness.

570.

As long as one thinks that one is
A separate being by oneself
One has perforce through such attachment
To do deeds good or bad, and earn
And experience their results.

(Karma binds one who has a sense of separateness and doership.)

571.

The Lord of Life has placed the demon
Ego as a sentry strict
To make certain that the body lasts
Until it eats to the last bite
The fruit that has been earned by deeds.

572.

The good or evil deeds we did
In former lives appear again
In this our current worldly life
As happiness or misery
And as the sources whence these spring —
Friendship firm or hatred fierce.

573.

Let no one seek to gain good ends
Regardless of the means employed.
If the means are evil, they corrupt
The intended good. Therefore make sure
That means are ever wholly pure.

574.

Good are those deeds which are performed
Lovingly and with calm, pure mind.
Deeds done in fierce excitement and defiled
By desire must be classed as evil.

575.

How to define the non-self, this
Phenomenal world? Created by
The mind from its true nature swerving,
Made up of sense-perceptions only,
It is the dwelling place
Of bewildering multiplicity.
In the Self is no duality.

576.

Knowing something is but drawing
 The boundary that limits it.
 Defining, measuring is the mark of
 Knowledge.
 The all-transcending Self cannot
 Be measured and cannot be known.

577.

Because as one alone without
 Another shines the Self, there is
 No question of Its seeing or being seen.
 And therefore when one seeks the seer
 And sees the Self, the Heart flies open
 And all triads flee far away.

578.

The bright awareness which is our true Being
 Is the sole Truth that the heart should
 cherish.
 The dyads and triads we perceive
 Should be despised and cast away
 As dream-creations of the treacherous mind.

579.

Because the Self is immutable, non-dual,
 With nought beside Itself, It is
 Both the goal to gain and the proper path.
 Non-different are the two in truth.

580.

If the deluded, difference-seeing mind
 Subsides and vanishes once for all
 In the non-dual state of Being-Awareness,
 Those fancied entities (Person, God and
 World)
 Will all be merged in Brahman's Being
 Made up of Awareness pure.

581.

Knowledge is manifold say they
 Who know but objects, and not freedom
 From the dire delusion of differences.
 When the senses five, driven outward by
 desire,
 Are pulled back, then true, full Awareness
 Comes, and there is no other to be known.

582.

Says the Sage Dadhyang Atharva
 Out of his knowledge of the Self supreme :
 "The natural pleasure dog and bitch enjoy,
 That and no more may Indra and his queen
 Gain from mere carnal union."

583.

When hunger dire the stomach pinches
 Gruel and meanest rice like nectar taste.
 Even so the strongest pleasure springs
 Not from the inherent nature of objects,
 But from the intensity of our desire.

584.

The only Being is Awareness
 And Bliss is nothing but Awareness.
 Pleasure from elsewhere is delusion.
 Apart from the Self of Being-Awareness
 Can there be any real joy
 From objects merely fancied ?

585.

Fetching a dry bone from somewhere
 The foolish dog with sharp teeth bites it,
 Tears his own mouth, tastes his own blood
 And gloating says, "How sweet this
 bone is !"

586.

Ignorant of the bliss of Self-awareness
 Some clever people rate highly sex
 And such-like pleasures. And they perish
 Yearning for these even with their last
 breath.

587.

Forgetting the pure bliss eternal
 Welling up in the heart for our enjoyment,
 Foolish people yearn for fractured pleasures,
 Honey-dribbles squeezed from worthless
 objects.

MANTRA

By

Dr. M. Sadasiva Rao

Mantrā is, perhaps, the least understood part of our spiritual heritage. Mantras are mostly prayers and supplications to God composed in Sanskrit verses which are chanted during religious ceremonies and ritualistic worship. They are believed to be invested with a unique power called *Mantrā-Shakti*. What is the nature of this power and how do the words of the Mantras come to be invested with the power are questions which are answered here in the light of the ancient science of mind and thought propounded in our Shastras.

According to this science, when the mind perceives a physical object, it gets moulded into the form of that object. The moulded reproduction in the mind is called a *vritti*. There is an exact correspondence between the physical object and the *vritti* in the mind. Both of them are considered real : one of them in the physical world and the other in the mental or subtle world. The mind has a dual function in the process of mental perception. A part of it functions as the *Cogniser* and another part as the *Cognised*. They are in the relation of Subject and Object within the mind. The Cogniser is called *Shabdā* and the Cognised is the *vritti*. The term "shabda" means word uttered by mouth. The same term is also used for word in writing. *Shabdā* cognises the *vritti* through a process of mental ideation to result in the uttered or written word. A similar process of ideation is also involved when a *vritti* is recalled to the mind from memory.

To describe the process of ideation by *Shabdā*, it is necessary to make a brief digression into the occult field with which the reader may not be familiar. The individual (*jīvā*) has three bodies which work as a single whole in the mental process of percep-

tion and ideation. They are the physical body (*Sthūla sharirā*), the subtle body (*Sukshma sharirā*) and the causal body (*Kāraṇa sharirā*). The subtle body is also known as the *Linga Sharirā* and, in English, as the astral body. The individual may not be aware of the subtle and causal bodies. The physical body functions when he is using the senses of taste, smell, touch, hearing and seeing. The subtle body functions when he is thinking, feeling, visualising and willing. The causal body is contacted when he is thinking deep or diving deep in introspection and meditation. The causal body is so named as it carries the *samskāras* or the impression of past lives which determine (or are the cause of) one's present life, character and activities. *Samskāras* are also known as *vasanās*. What is most relevant to the subject of the Mantra is that when an individual realises the Self and becomes a *Jñāni*, his *samskāras* are lost together with his causal body. *His individual mind becomes free from the limitations imposed by the samskāras and becomes one with Infinite Consciousness or Brahman.*

To continue with the progress of ideation, *Shabdā* or the Cogniser part of the mind, has also causal, subtle and physical (or gross) forms. The causal *Shabdā* is a *samskāra*. In other words, it is inherited from past lives and is not created anew through perception like the *vritti*. The causal *Shabdā* is in "seed" form located in the causal body which is nearest to the Heart. It is called *Parā Shabda*. The mental movement of the creation of *vritti* in the mind evokes it to move first into the Heart and thence into the mind located in the brain. In the course of its movement to the Heart, it is called *Pashyanti Shabda*. During its movement to the mind or brain, when the "seed" *samskāra* is growing larger, it is

called *Madhyama Shabda*. It is then in the form of subtle thoughts not yet formed into words. From the mind or brain it gets transformed into spoken words issuing through the voice box in the throat as *Vaikbari Shabda*. The last is the physical or gross form of the *Shabda*. It is always in the language with which an individual is most conversant. The most important implication of all that has been explained on the subject of the Mantra is that *in the Jnani, who has no samskara in the form of Shabda, thoughts and words originate directly from the Self which is Pure Mind or Pure Consciousness.*

We have now full answers to the questions : What is a Mantra ? How does the Mantra acquire *Mantra-Shakti* ? and What is *Mantra-Shakti* ?

Mantras are words uttered by a Jnani and having their Source in the Self or Pure Consciousness. Therefore, they are invested with the power of Pure Consciousness or *Chaitanyā*. The power of the Mantra is *Mantra-Chaitanya*. The Mantra is, therefore, *Shabda Brahman* or *Brahman* in the Form of Uttered Words.

The Vedas are the source of the most potent Mantras such as the *Gāyatri Mantra*. These mantras are invested with *Mantra-Chaitanyā* for the reason that they were seen by Rishis and Seers who were *Jñānis* of a high order. Other Rishis who succeed-

ed them over many centuries have chanted the Vedas and have invested them with further *Chaitanyā*. The Upanishads, the Puranas and many other ancient scriptures are the words of *Jñānis* and the sources of many Mantras. The Sadguru who initiates a disciple with a *Mantrā* invests it with *Mantra-Chaitanyā*. The words of *Jñānis* of our own times also carry *Mantra-Chaitanyā*. The mere reading of their recorded words elevates the mind and turns it inwards to seek the Source of the mind. Indeed, their words can be made use of as Mantras for the same purpose. The words need not necessarily be in Sanskrit but can be in any language. Among the briefest of Mantras are the *Names of God*. Many great Bhaktas (Devotees) who were also *Jñānis* have imbued them with *Mantra-Chaitanyā* through uttering the Names with great devotion so that one can say truly : "God and His Name are One." The greatest of the Mantras is the *Pranava* "AUM". It is the subtle sound that creates the universe and pervades it. It is called *Nāda-Brahman* and is always uttered before chanting any Mantra. What is *Mantra Sādhana* has been explained by Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi in simple words in his teaching to Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni :

"When a *Mantrā* is repeated, if one watches the Source from which the Mantra Sound is produced, the mind is absorbed in That ; that is *Tapas*."

"WHEN"

By

Ramesh V. Phadnis

When eyes, ears, mind
no longer
are mine
whom do they belong to ?
When I am
no longer
mine
whom do I belong to ?
who am I ?

Glory of Arunachala

Arunachala Mahatmyam

Translated from Tamil by

M. C. Subramanian

CHAPTER XX

PARVATI PRAISES THE LORD OF ARUNACHALA

MARKANDEYA said :

Ah ! How wicked were Mahishasura's deeds ! How great the valour of Durga, the reliever of distress ! After thus killing Mahishasura, in what manner did the daughter of the king of the mountains practise austerities ?

Nandisa said : Durga held the asura's head in one hand, and with the other which held the sword, did her obeisance to Goddess Gauri. The latter looked with great kindness at Durga who was dancing with joy. Opening her mouth and revealing her teeth which illumined the world by their brightness, she said : "Dweller on the Vindhyas ! You have achieved a formidable task. My austerities will now be completed without any obstacle. Your actions purify the world. Therefore please throw away the terrible head of Mahisha." On hearing this Durga tried to throw it away but could not shake it off her hand. She was distressed.

Gautama then spoke to Durga : 'Please create a new and sacred *tirtha* and bathe in it, when your sin will be expiated.' Fearing that she had committed a sin she cleft a rock with her sword. Immediately there came out water as clear as a pure heart. Uttering the mantra '*Namah Sonadrinathaya*' (Prostrations to the Lord of the Red Hill), Durga bathed in that *tirtha*. At the place where fell the linga which had stuck in Mahisha's throat, it became enshrined under the name of Papanasana.

When Durga dipped again, the asura's head slipped from her hand. She then made her obeisance to the Lord of Papanasana and circumambulated him. Gautama praised her. When next she stood before Sri Gauri the latter saw that she was free from sin. Turning to Gautama she said : 'Although Mahishasura was a wicked person he kept a Siva Linga inside his throat. It was I that ordered Durga to kill him. Therefore you must prescribe something for the expiation of my sin also.'

Upon this Gautama said : "Goddess ! By merely thinking of you, who are the power which creates, sustains and destroys the worlds, all the worlds become pure. If still you ask me this, it can only be to keep up the usage of the world. If one transgresses the usage others too will do so. Is it not so ? Listen ! I shall prescribe a *karma* (religious observance) which will purify the heart. It is the column of Effulgence which has subsided into the form of the Red Hill in this manner. If, after completing your austerities and worship, you look at it on the full moon day of the month of Kartika all your desires will be fulfilled."

When Gauri heard these words she immediately began to practice severe austerities. Surrounded by the flames of the five fires, she stood looking at the Sun. In this state she looked like a clear crystal. And, as if attracted by the strings of her love, the auspicious full moon day of Kartika (soon) dawned. On the evening of that day a divine effulgence was seen on the top of the Red Hill. Goddess Uma saw Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and others who had come to see it. She also saw that that effulgence was blazing without wood or

oil or wicks. She wondered at it and circumambulated the Hill, making obeisance to Isa at every step. At the same time she also pleased the Lord of the Red Hill with these praises :

"Thou that madest a bow of the Meru Mountain ! Dweller on Kailasa Mountain ! Obeisance to Thee ! Son-in-law of the King of the Snowy Mountain ! Obeisance to Thee ! Thou who art in the form of the Red Hill ! Obeisance to Thee ! Thou who art adored by Varuna and the other Devas ! Thou who art bright as the young sun ! Lord of the Aruna Hill ! Embodiment of mercy ! Obeisance to Thee ! O Wearer of Ganga ! Hail ! Wearer of the moon ! Hail ! Natesa who dancest in bliss at the time of sunset ! Hail ! Isa who art adored by the hosts of girvanas, gandharvas, siddhas and vidyadharas ! Hail ! Father of Ganesa ! Hail ! The affectionate father of Shanmukha ! Hail ! Lord of Parvati ! Hail ! Thou who art a rare king !"

On seeing the goddess who stood praising him and looking firmly at the effulgence, Vrishadhwaaja (He who has the bull on his banner, i.e. Siva) approached her with great kindness, revealed to her his beautiful form and looked affectionately at his beloved from where he sat on the bull. He then began to console that maiden who had relinquished all her riches and engaged in severe austerities.

CHAPTER XXI

SIVA PRAISES PARVATI

NANDISA continued :

Upon this Brahma, Saraswati, Vishnu, Kamala Devi (Lakshmi), Indra, Pulomaja, the Protectors of the cardinal points, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Vasus, the thirty-three crores of Devas, Sages, the eleven Rudras, the twelve Adityas, hosts of Bhairavas, Pisachas, Vetalas and Bhutas, surrounded Mahesa and followed him while everyone wondered at the battle between the Asuras and the Yogini hosts which resembled the commotion produced at the end of the worlds. The goddess who saw Isa approaching her rejoiced very much. She forgot the misery which she had endured on

account of their separation for a long time. The hairs on her body stood erect (on account of excessive ecstasy). She was overcome by joy. While she stood modestly looking at her toes Siva got down from the bull, took her hand and spoke to her smilingly. "Goddess ! Why this needless grief ? Are you not fit to be adored by everyone ? I also clasp my hands in obeisance to you. Do you not know that the two of us are like the Moon and the moonlight ? Goddess ! Since our relationship is from eternity, is it proper that you should fall into this confusion ? What has your flower-soft body to do with severe austerities and samadhis suitable for sturdy persons ? I am Narayana, you are Lakshmi ; I am Brahma, you are Sarasvati ; I am Nagendra, you are Varuni ; I am Chandra (moon), you are Rohini (a star) ; I am Agni, you are Swaha ! I am Surya (Sun), you are Suvarchala ; I am the Ocean, you are the Ganga ; I am Meru, you are Urvara ; I am Indra, you are Pulomaja ; I am Kamadeva, you are Rati Devi ; I am Ego the king of kings, you are the Buddhi (intellect) ; I am the wind, you are sama (the calm) ; I am the sea, you are the wave ; I am Purusha, you are Prakriti ; you are Knowledge, I am the object of Knowledge ; you are the word, I am its meaning ; I am Isvara, you are a part of me. It is by your orders that the acts of creation, sustenance and destruction are carried on. Unlike other persons the two of us are non-separate. You have of your own accord (separated yourself) from us who are Consciousness and its Effulgence and, taking up a body, are suffering misery and are without cause vexed with me. I shall find a remedy for this immediately." Saying so he lifted her up and seated her by his side.

Goddess Uma who was placed firmly on his lap merged herself in him on account of her great love. It looked as if she wanted to hide herself from him out of modesty. Immediately the two bodies became one. With one half white and the other red, the body of Ardhanarisvara (the Lord who is half-woman) was curious to behold. It became a beautiful form with coiled up tresses on one side, a breast

covered by a necklace and one half of the crescent moon on the other, bangles on one hand, anklets on one foot and an ear-ring on one ear. After giving up half of his body to the Goddess in this manner he said to her : " Goddess ! We shall not hereafter remain separate from each other. Since you left Guha who was sucking your breasts and went away to perform austerities, you shall remain here as my half under the name of Apitakuchamba (Unnamulai in Tamil meaning the goddess whose breasts have not been sucked). Let people lovingly worship you who are Unnamulai and me the Lord of the Aruna Hill, and gain worldly enjoyments as well as Liberation.

" As Durga, the slayer of Mahisha, is a part of You, she shall abide here conferring the

benefits of mantras upon those who repeat them. This *Khadga Tirtha* (water of the sword) will remove all the diseases and sins of those who bathe in it even once. Gautama will always be famous. The Seven Mothers (Goddesses) shall become the Mothers of the worlds. Bhairava and others shall remain in the temple of Aruna. I shall abide here as Aruna. And you shall stay here as Arunā (feminine form of Aruna). All siddhis will be attained here easily."

Those who listen to the words of comfort spoken to the daughter of the king of the mountains will be absolved of all sins and gain Svarga and Liberation.

(To be continued)

Solemn as a Seed

By

Ka. Kavana

solemn as a seed
 in the hands of the Unknown,
 bleak as the moon
 on the verge of fertility,
 placid as the sky
 in the sun at noon,
 i am the unborn . . .
 forlorn to the wandering trails
 of the earth's endless labyrinths ;
 yet i go the way with peace,
 unscathed by the rounds of rebirth.

INTRODUCING.....

....Sri Thapas Swami

Sri Thoppayya Mudaliar, an ardent devotee of Bhagavan Sri Ramana, was born in Kalappal, a sacred place in the Tanjore district of Tamil Nadu, as the son of Sri Aiyappa Mudaliar, a very kind hearted and charitably disposed devotee.

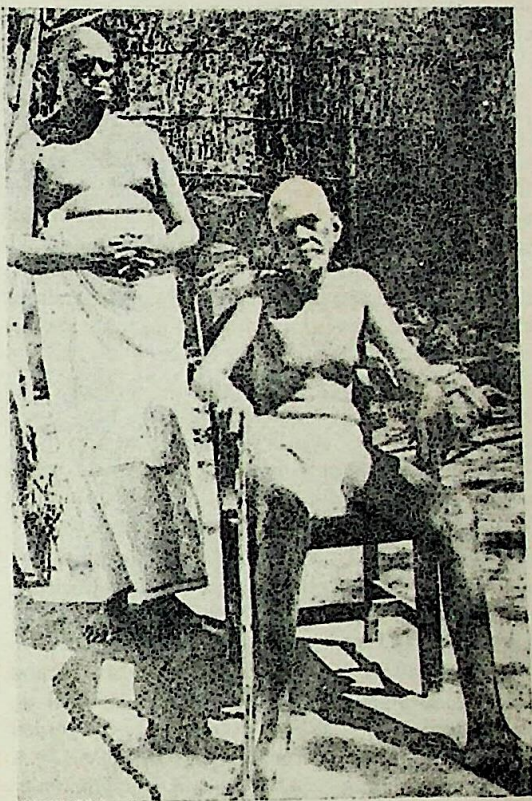
It is interesting how he came to Bhagavan. In 1915, he got severe stomach ache. Medicines did not cure it and he was advised by a well-wisher to go to Tirupati and have darshan of Lord Venkateswara there. He accepted the advice and on his way alighted at Tiruvannamalai and had darshan of Sri Arunachaleswara at the Temple. That night, a Brahmin youth, who had met Sri Mudaliar that morning asked him if he had gone round the Hill Arunachala (*giri pradakshina*) and had darshan of Sri Seshadri Swami and Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. He gave a negative reply and the youth remarked that his visit to Tiruvannamalai was of no use ! That was corroborated by Ganapati Muni, whom he chanced to meet near the temple immediately after. Ganapati Muni gave an illuminating talk on the significance of *Giri pradakshina*.

And so, lead by the same youth, Sri Mudaliar went round the Hill and had darshan of Sri Bhagavan. From that moment his heart was ever drawn to Maharshi and he began to visit him off and on.

In 1926, when he happened to stay at the Ashram for a few days he asked the Maharshi if the giving up of worldly life was not indispensable for Self-enquiry. Bhagavan did not encourage him that way and asked him to turn his attention to the ever-present Self under all circumstances of life. "What is there to give up or gain afresh? Where to go? Who is to go? Everything that is, is only the ever-present Being", replied Bhagavan. Sri Mudaliar was deeply moved by this reply and went on sobbing for some time. Bhagavan made fun of him before Sri Muruganar and observed: "Wherever one goes it is the Self and Self alone and one has only to find out what it is."

Though he has received replies from Bhagavan to various questions on many occasions he firmly believes that the very presence of Bhagavan is capable of removing all doubts and make one established in the Self.

He had the good fortune of taking a leading part in the Maha Kumbhabhishekam of Sri Bhagavan's Mother's Shrine at the Ashram in 1949, having had



Sri Thapas Swami with Bhagavan

good experience in that line already. The express request of Sri Niranjanananda Swami in connection with this task got the silent approval of Bhagavan. Sri Mudaliar was entrusted with this great task which he successfully accomplished, gaining the appreciation and gratitude of all Ramana-bhaktas. He will ever be remembered by devotees for his service in this connection.

Sri Thoppayya Mudaliar is now 86 years old and he has learnt Vedanta systematically from a resident Swami of the famous Koilur Math. His learning and devotion found their utter fulfilment in the proximity of Bhagavan Ramana. He is a shining example of learning, devotion and humility.

He had the good fortune of meeting Ma Anandamayee also, who called him *Thapas Swami*, by which name he is now known to all. What greater *tapas* is there than coming in contact with the enlightened !

BOOK REVIEWS

THE FINDHORN GARDEN: Planning a new vision of Man and Nature in co-operation. By the Findhorn Community. Introduction by Sir George Trevelyan Bt. Turnstone Book. Wildwood House, Upper Addison Gardens, London. The Findhorn Foundation, The Park, Forres IV 36 OTZ Scotland.

This book will be widely read and we wish that a cheaper Indian edition could be published. It will be widely read because it is about a new sort of miracle, and people like miracles, supernormal happenings and Sensitives who can contact another spiritual level.

We are accustomed to miracles of healing from those of Christ to those of moderns like Agnes Sanford told in her *Healing Light*. But this book tells of miracles of growing plants in an arid desert soil and Sensitives who can talk with the spiritual life that is in all and learn how to co-operate with it.

The Founders of the Findhorn community were the husband who did the physical work of gardener, his wife who in silences could hear the messages of Light Itself, and a friend who was a sensitive to Devas and other spiritual beings which inhabit everything human, animal, vegetable and mineral — you will notice from a photograph that even garden tools are treated with kindness and care. A member known as Roc, soon joined the community. — they are humble and selfless and remain anonymous. Roc was a sensitive who could commune with gnomes and the great God Pan himself. Others followed and there is now after 14 years a flourishing community.

This may sound like a modern utopia or fairy tale; but the fact is that these people took a piece of sandy stony desert land in the north of Scotland and transformed it without fertilizers into a extraordinarily fertile land which grew preposterously sized vegetables and flowers, which attracted the attention of professional gardeners, shops and catalogues as well as fellow spirits the world over. There is no other way to account for this except the co-operation between man and the spiritual powers of the universe with Sensitives as the intermediaries of these spiritual beings and man.

But there is another intermediary and to my mind this is the important aspect for us ordinary people. That intermediary is LOVE. We cannot all be

sensitives, and in any sensitives can be bad as well as good, and in earlier times they were plentiful in societies based upon slavery and cruelty. But LOVE is a universal spiritual power, and can be cultivated by all. Without some measure of it societies would fall apart altogether.

The Findhorn Garden is based upon conscious love towards all creation even weeds and even noxious insects. All life is one, a single unity and no illwill may be cherished against anything. What you will do about weeds and noxious insects without poisons is for each to decide. If you have sensitives these can tell you what Devas and Gnomes advise. But you almost certainly will not have such help. And Findhorn makes no rules. 'It is up to each to make his own contacts with plants and establish co-operation with them. We are not here to give or be given rules, we are here to find this attunement.' So said one of the Sensitives. (p. 144). Therefore let us not covet our neighbours' talents, but set to work with our own talents to cultivate loving kindness and non-antagonism towards all, and at all times, and this even if we cannot cultivate our own little vegetable garden to help relieve the starvation of the world. We may not, like Findhorn, grow foxgloves eight feet high in place of the usual four feet. And perhaps it may help us to note that even Findhorn has fallen back to four feet foxgloves! The book is beautifully illustrated.

MARIE B. BYLES

THE LIFE OF THE BUDDHA: By H. Saddhatisa. Pub.: Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. (Paperback). Pp. 85. Price: £ 1.50.

Though condensed in form, this account of the life of Buddha leaves out no significant feature of his career or his teaching. The writer takes a balanced view of history, legend and tradition and presents only the documented facts, though wherever necessary he refers to current traditions. He draws attention to the symbolic nature of some of the incidents associated with the Buddha.

There is a good deal in this book which is of relevance to the needs of seekers of all ages, of all climes. When a monk complained of his inability to concentrate in meditation, for instance, the

Master identified five factors which are necessary for the calm and concentration: Association with mature and spiritually developed people; restraint of the senses; practice of Right Speech; keeping aloof from passion; practice of Right Effort; insight into the nature of the First Noble Truth i.e. that sorrow is a condition of life. (p. 55).

Among the interesting incidents narrated is the one describing the violent nature of the dissensions that took place once between one group of monks — 'Doctrine men' — and the other — 'Discipline men' — and the vain efforts of the Buddha to restore peace. The monks came to their senses only when the lay disciples withdrew their support.

IN THE BLOWING OUT OF A FLAME: By Michael Edwardes. Pub.: Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. Pp. 208. Price: £ 5.50.

Told in a racy style, this is the story of the life and message of Buddha and a history of Buddhism from its beginnings up to the present day. To the historian in the author, Buddha is not just a philosopher or founder of a religion. "The historical Buddha was a revolutionary but not a social reformer. His revolution was of the heart, in the way men felt about the existential world. The reform of society, the creation of the new society, was for men to work out themselves. When that new society emerged it would be as an aggregate of a series of successful personal revolutions. The Buddha provided an ideology of revolution, a revolutionary ideology of revolution."

Answering the question why Buddhism failed to survive in the land of its birth, he writes: "... lost its hold on the hearts of the masses. By identifying with the upper classes, Buddhism lost its egalitarian appeal, leaving ordinary people with a sense of loss which was easily filled by other, apparently more concerned, faiths."

Dr. Edwardes has something quite pungent to say about the service or disservice rendered to the Zen discipline by writers like Dr. Suzuki. There is a good deal of sense in what he says about the dilution of the spirit of Zen in order to make it 'exportable'. We would add that that is not true of Zen alone.

THE MYTH OF FREEDOM AND THE WAY OF MEDITATION: By Chogyam Trungpa. Pub.: Shambhala Publications, Berkeley (U.S.A.). Pp. 176. Price: \$ 3.95.

Based upon the talks given by Chogyam Trungpa, this work explains several important concepts and processes in the Mahayana Buddhism, especially of

the Tibetan stamp. The author raises common questions and gives uncommon answers. Speaking of freedom which is cherished so much by the modern man, he points out that the freedom to pursue common goals and desires lands one ultimately into an endless slavery. While on meditation, it is explained: "We neither hold the mind very tightly nor let it go completely. If we try to control the mind, then its energy will rebound back on us. If we let the mind go completely, then it will become very wild and chaotic. So we let the mind go, but at the same time there is some discipline involved. Awareness of bodily movement, breath and one's physical situation are techniques common to all traditions. The basic practice is to be present, right here. The goal is also the technique. Precisely being in this moment, neither suppressing nor wildly letting go, but being precisely aware of what you are."

There are a number of interesting anecdotes in these pages: "At the dawn of his enlightenment someone asked the Buddha, 'What are your credentials? How do we know that you are enlightened?' He touched his hand to the ground. 'This solid earth is my witness. This solid earth, this same earth, is my witness.' Sane and solid and definite, no imaginings, no concepts, no emotions, no frivolity, but being basically what is: this is the awakened state. And this is the example we follow in our meditation practice."

MEDITATIONS: By Swami Satyananda Sarasvati. Pub.: Bihar School of Yoga, Monghyr, Bihar. Pp. 313. Price: Rs. 30.

A book from experience. There are innumerable publications on the subject which are either incompetent rehashes from older treatises or stunts making pompous claims and misleading the public. This work is of a different genre. It is a product of extensive knowledge on the subject, long practice and first hand knowledge of the difficulties of others gathered in practical training.

There is first the theory of meditation, what it is all about, what it aims at, how it contributes to the inner evolution of man. The effects of the practice of meditation on bodily health, on the mental processes, its role in the different kinds of Yoga and the corroboration obtained from modern science regarding the workings and ends of meditation form the themes of the first few chapters. The necessary preparations, physical and mental, and the various practices of meditation are covered in the next two sections. *Asanas*, *mudras* and *bandhas* are illustrated. Detailed instructions are given and the reader helped to grasp the essentials of the system.

In the chapter on Nada Yoga, the author writes : Nada Yoga divides existence into five spheres : the physical, pranic, mental, supramental and ananda or atmic. The nada of each sphere is a symbol enabling the mind to pass into deeper layers of consciousness. When the physical plane is transcended, the subtle sounds of the movements of pranic consciousness are heard. Nada Yogis follow the chain of ever subtler sounds to a point-like centre in their innermost being. For bhaktas, this centre is in anahata chakra, for yogis it is in ajna ; for vedantins it is sahasrara. Nada Yogis find the nada, or continuous inaudible and spontaneous sound, in bindu . . . some describe the ultimate sound as AUM, others say it is like the unceasing sound of honey-bees. According to nada yoga, it comes from the sphere beyond anandamaya kosha, or the third dimension of consciousness, which is a body full of bliss — a point where the individual realises his highest consciousness in nada and sees the whole universe in the form of sound."

An invaluable handbook for yoga.

M. P. PANDIT

THE LOTUS FIRE, A STUDY IN SYMBOLIC YOGA :

By George S. Arundale. Pub. : The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras-600020. Pp. 776. Price : Rs. 85.

This great study in symbolic yoga, which was out of print for nearly forty years, and now republished is a valuable study in the Yoga of Remembrance, the Yoga of the Memory of the Divinity in all things. These are notes taken at the time of the author's own personal exploration in the field of symbology regarded as a means of conveying metaphysical conceptions in a tangible version. The title of the book suggests the particular form of Yoga attempted, namely, Fire which "has at its heart the Lotus conception". The significance of the Lotus, it may be recalled, is a world system or Brahma having arisen from the navel of Mahavishnu, or All-Knowledge, which again symbolises Desire ; the primal form of which is embodied in the Vedic text : "May I be born forth as multitudinous progeny."

The author associates the Lotus with all the qualities related to such symbols as the point, the line, the circle, the cross and the *Svastica* as in the following paragraph :

"In a flower dwells the Point, for the flower is a Silence and a Darkness, a Consummation and a Forthgoing. In the flower moves rhythmically the Ceaseless Breath of God. In the flower dwells the Web that is the Womb. In the flower is that Line which shoots forth from the Centre to North and South. The flower is a very universe in itself,

is encircled by its own self-contained nature. The flower contains in itself the *Svastica* of its own individual growth, reflection of the *Svastica* of the universe. And every flower is mysteriously the shadow of *Matri-padma*, the Mother Lotus of us all."

Like Blake, the author tries

"To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower."

Of the five divisions of the book, the last one "Symbols at Work" is a very informative one, as it consists of corroborative and supplementary articles and notes arranged alphabetically. In the subsection "Yoga seen through Many Eyes" is given the six verses of the *Yoga Vasishtha* originally selected by Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi and published with a free rendering in English by the Ashramam (pp. 658-9). From the last words of Jesus on the Cross : "My God, how Thou dost glorify Me!" quoted in the book for the earnest aspirant is likely to realise that there are heights after heights within himself which he must face, climb, and conquer.

THE SERPENT OF PARADISE : By Miguel Serrano. Pub. : Vikas Publishing House, 5 Darya Ganj, Ansari Road, Delhi-110006. Pp. 184. Price : Rs. 6.50.

Miguel Serrano, a Chilean diplomat, describes his adventure in the Indian continent in search of a mythic mysterious "Siddha Ashram" from the caves of Elephant to the snowy ranges of Badrinath. Written in the usual style of the observant, critical foreigner, he misses nothing that is odd or peculiar. Every experience was an odd mixture of pain and pleasure to him as he journeyed through this land of complex extravagances where every sight and scene, littering the Indian landscape, was either appealing or dismaying. Here are to be found his impressions of his meeting with every kind of person from the Swami of Ashahabel to Jiddu Krishnamurti, a medley of vague memories.

HINDUISM : By Swami Gurudasananda. Pub : Sri Janaky Matha Ashram, Ganapathy, Nagar, Thanjavur. Pp. 96. Price : 3.50.

Swami Gurudasananda's handbook on Hinduism rightly stresses the greatness of the Vedic religion which has withstood the ravages of time and overcome all alien movements which had time and again come very near crushing it. The catholicity and total absence of dogmatism in the *Sanatana Dharma*, its adequacy to meet the needs of each and every individual according to his temperament its various prescriptions appropriate to the stage of each one's spiritual development, comprise the various chapters of this invaluable book.

ARGUS.

THE CHURCH'S NEUROSIS AND TWENTIETH CENTURY REVELATIONS: By C. Edward Barker. Pub: Rider & Co., 3, Fitzroy Square, London. Pp. 272. Price: £ 3.75.

Spiritually under-developed countries of the West embraced the Christian Faith, and integrated it with their way of life. The King-of-Kings and Lord-of-Lords concept of God, which in reality belonged to the Old Testament period, suited their political ambitions — feudalism, capitalism, colonialism. Looking back at the theology that developed in the centuries gone by, one is left to conclude that the Church was not shaping the way of life, but the exigencies of temporal power were shaping the theological formulations.

Saintly men, mystics who were in direct communion with God, and therefore above dogmas and creeds, helped to keep up the credibility of the Church. Honest individuals who raised voices of protest were mercilessly destroyed. However, when the political power of the West declined, the Church was paralysed and was incapable of facing the challenges posed by individuals, groups and the materialist philosophy of life. For the past half a century Christian theologians have put up a determined fight to allay the fears of "death of God" — God of the developed countries, long live God! The book under review is one such heroic effort. The author, Edward Barker, says: "The century's theologians have failed to stir the pulse of modern man. At best their views are disparate and depressing. There are no shouts of 'Eureka'." Neither has the author the answers, nor could he give "words of solid comfort".

According to Barker, St. Paul is responsible for the plight the Church is in. St. Paul interpreted the Message of Jesus to his own generation. Whose fault was it that subsequent generations could not find in Jesus the inspiration relevant to their times? They failed to find it because they were obsessed with their own way of life.

Barker quotes Freud and Fairbairn to say: "This severance of the lower self from the higher self, really signifies unending clash." There is no such clash. What is happening is the true Self evolving out of the enveloping ignorance (which causes the false self) by the experiences gained, birth after birth. Barker says: "God had made sexual creatures, and God is no Tantalus giving people desires only to torture them," and that "sex is such an essential and God-given part that it is impossible to annihilate it." Spiritual aspirants in India and elsewhere, and many in monasteries and convents will testify that leaving "sex behind" is easier than

leaving "self behind". A man evolves from his animal nature to manhood, on to the New Being, the citizen of the Kingdom of God, by experiences gained birth after birth.

Western theologians will continue to be in the wilderness as long as they assume that the animal urges "God had given", and the way of life they have built for themselves, are basic axioms. The problems they face, and for which they seek answers in theology, are the consequences of their out-dated way of life.

Barker takes into account twentieth century revelations like psychoanalysis and psychic research. Had he also taken serious note of the Spiritual revelations of the East, it might have been his privilege to shout "Eureka". Western theologians have so far probed into the religions of the East only like the spies sent by Joshua with a view to conquest. This superior attitude has to change if Christian theologians are to understand Jesus. The love that Jesus taught and the current practices of competitive society have nothing in common.

M. P. JOHN.

CHRIST IS THE WAY: By E. Le Joly. Pub.: St. Paul Publication, Allahabad-211002. Pp. 215. Price: Rs. 7.50.

The author of this "Christian Faith and Practice", who has also written other works on Christianity like *Life of Christ*, *Prayer Book for All*, *Witnesses of Christ*, gives here a clear and detailed account of what it means to be a Christian. Basic definitions of the many terms used in the faith and several dogmas which exemplify the religious and social life of the Christian are given in a simple and lucid manner. The author explains several dogmas of the Catholic church whose implications may not be familiar even to the pious Christian. Prayer, sacraments, baptism, the holy Eucharist, holy orders — these are some of the topics discussed in this work.

This is a very welcome book which has to be widely read not only by the Christians but also by others who are interested in this religion.

**THE WISDOM OF THE OVERSELF:
THE INNER REALITY:**

By Dr. Paul Brunton. Pub.: B. I. Publications, 35 Mount Road, Madras-600002. Price: Rs. 10 each.

Dr. Brunton does not require any introduction to readers interested in philosophical and religious literature. Very well-known for his systematic investi-

gation of the realm of the mystic and spiritual, he has written many works interpreting the real significance of many of our spiritual experiences and the concepts employed in the religious quest.

The Inner Reality is an earlier work in which he examines such questions as God, practical help on Yoga and the mystery of Jesus. In three chapters he examines elaborately the real message of the *Bhagavad Gita* which as he says satisfies both the spiritual ideal and the practical life. The *Gita* is essentially the scripture of the yogis and shows how renunciation leads to revelation and revelation to realisation. The author's conclusion in this context is a remarkable assimilation of the Hindu teachings that the Divinity is everywhere, and that everywhere God can be found and that God is good.

The Wisdom of the Overself is deeper in its analysis and is a sequel to the author's *The Hidden*

Teaching beyond the Yoga. The learned author arrives at more profound conclusions which are however on the whole in unison with the Hindu thought. In his very first chapter he arrives at the conclusion that the world which we know is made up by our thinking and feeling. Beyond these, the world does not consist of anything else. The *Tripura Rahasya* elucidates this more systematically. Dreams and sleep, the ego (I) and death, evil and suffering, *maya* and *karma* — all these topics are discussed in a very learned and balanced manner. The last chapter deals with the question of the fruits of philosophy and emphasizes that one should lead a surrendered life.

The B. I. Publications have done a very commendable work in placing before the less affluent such inspiring books at a modest cost.

PROF. S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI

"Human excellence is achieved by making demands *on oneself*, not on others." — *Ortega*

* * * *

"The imperfect are not necessarily *evil*. The morally lame, half and blind are still human." — *Manas*

* * * *

"Man is not a thing." — *Erich Fromm*

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

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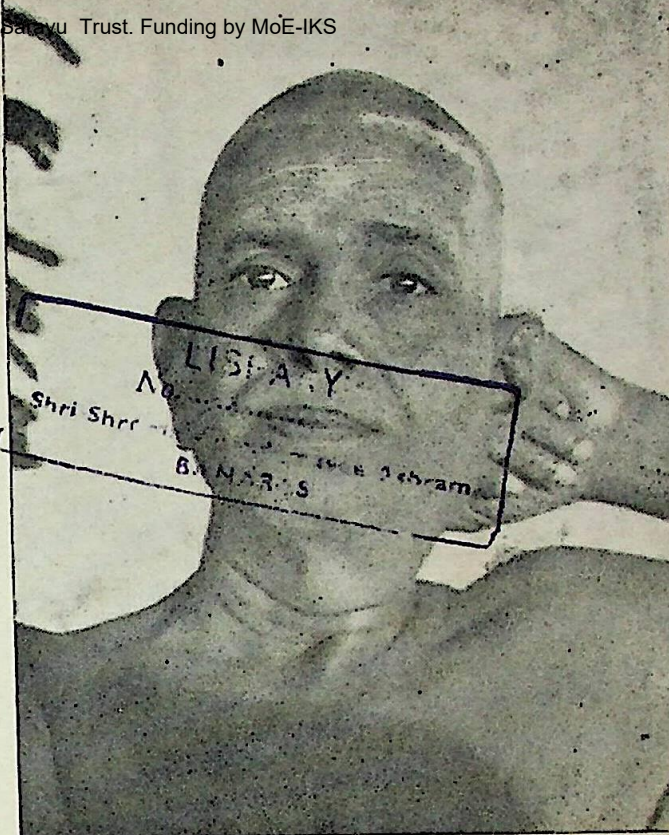
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ASHRAM BULLETIN

JAYANTI CELEBRATION DAY

THE 97th BIRTHDAY OF THE MASTER



The Jayanti (Birthday) of the Master is a Solemn Occasion when His Presence is felt powerfully by the devotees. On January 6, 1977, it was celebrated with the customary solemnity at the Ashram.

Rajkumari Prabhavati Raje, one of the old devotees of Sri Bhagavan and who has heard His Teachings direct from His own lips for a number of years, gave two moving talks on Jan. 5 and on the Jayanti Day on Sri Maharshi and His teachings.

Her exposition of the salient features of a devotee and his acceptance by the Master, moved the audience to tears of ecstasy. She recalled how she was too young and knew too little when she approached Bhagavan and how a frank confession of utter helplessness was all that was needed to gain His compassion. Her outpourings on the greatness and grace of Guru Ramana were soul-stirring, as they flowed from a sincere heart.

Commencing with *dhanurmāsa puja* at dawn, the morning programme consisted of recitation of Tamil Praises and Works on and by Sri Bhagavan, by old devotees such as *Sarvasri Ramaswami Pillai*, *Kunju Swami*, *K. Natesan* and *Swami Satyananda*. The spacious *Ramana Auditorium*, which comfortably

accommodated all the visitors who turned up for the day, wore a festive look, with colourful bunting and illumination. The *Ramaneswara Maha Lingam* was well decorated with a number of specially made garlands and ornaments, in addition to the silver *prabha* (ornamental arch). There were elaborate *pujas* throughout the day, which included *Ekadasa Rudra Mahanyāsa*, *Lakshārchanā* and *Upanishad Pārāyana*.

Thousands of poor were fed, in addition to hundreds of guests. In the afternoon, *Rajkumari Prabhavati Raje* gave another moving talk on Sri Bhagavan. After dinner, the film on Bhagavan was screened and was viewed with equal pleasure by those who had not seen it before and those who had.

AT NEW YORK CITY

The small circle of His devotees in *Arunachala Ashrama* in New York City, U.S.A., celebrated Sri Bhagavan's 97th Birthday. On Jan. 6, *Sri Chakra* and Sri Bhagavan were garlanded and the regular daily hymns were recited by the devotees followed by '*Arūṇāchala Shiva*' and other chants. Then silence was observed as it is done during the daily evening worship. Sri Bhagavan's teaching was read out and then prasad was distributed.

The New York City *Arunachala Ashrama* has purchased a large farm in Nova Scotia, Canada¹ for the residential *Arunachala Ashrama* and two years ago *Sri Arunachala Ramana Mandiram*² was built there and *Sri Chakra* was installed with the help of the Ashram President, Sri T. N. Venkataraman, along with the large photographs of Sri Ramana Bhagavan and *Arunachala Hill*.

AT NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA

Here in Annapolis Valley of Peace, in the pure white wintry valley, inmates and friends of the *Arunachala Ashrama* sat at His Feet in His shrine and praised and worshipped Him with hearts filled with gratitude.

The following poem was written by Mrs. Joan Greenblatt specially for the holy occasion.

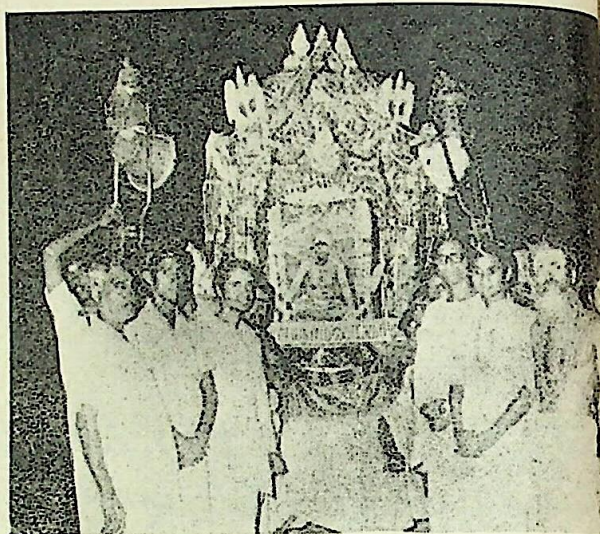
SILENT PRAISE

*What praise can be offered to the
Shining One,
Which has not been said time and
again?*

*Which flower is fresh and
fit to lay at
The Lotus-Feet of our
Lord Beloved?*

*With what words can we
repay
Your infinite gift of
blissful silence?
If only for a fleeting
moment*

*We see your eyes and
cease to be.
Ourselves becoming
sparks of you
We shall truly spread
your glory.*



The portrait of Bhagavan taken in procession at Madurai.

AT RAMANA MANDIRAM, MADURAI

In the hallowed spot where Sri Bhagavan attained His *Atmānubhūti*, *Sri Ramana Mandiram* at Madurai, devotees celebrated the *Jayanti* of Bhagavan, with great veneration and enthusiasm. The programme covering three days included discourses, *bhajan*, music and *Veda Parayana* and on the *Jayanti* day, January 6, the portrait of Bhagavan was taken in procession along the main streets of Madurai.

Those who gave discourses on Bhagavan and His teachings included Sri Swami Achalananda, Sri K. Bhavanisankar and Sri S. S. M. Sundaram. *Bhajan* was conducted by Sri Sellammal and Sundaram and Seturam Bhajan Mandali. *Nadaswaram* was played by Kumari M. P. Saraswati and party.

There was also feeding of the poor on a fairly large scale.

Sri N. Venkataraman, Secretary of the *Mandiram* thanked all those who had helped to make the celebrations a success.

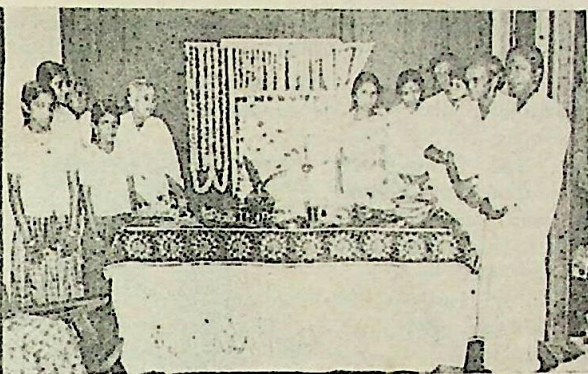
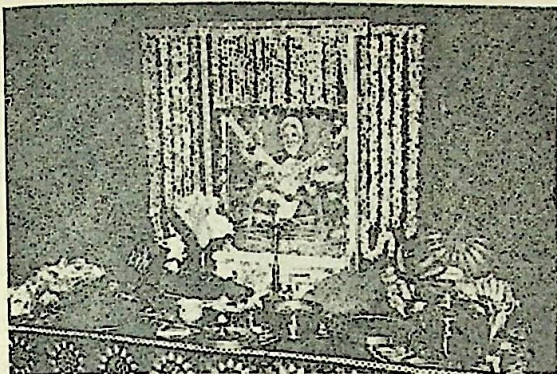
AT RAMANA KENDRA, DELHI

Jayanti was celebrated as a religious function on January 6, with *Rudrajapa* and puja at the Kendra in Delhi and with *archanas* at the Muruga temple in Uttara Swami Malai, where also '*Arūṇāchala Shiva*' was sung in chorus.

In connection with Bhagavan's *Jayanti*, gifts of slates, durries and other articles were given to the newly started nursery school in the re-settlement colony at Shakkarpur.

¹ referred to in our issue of Oct. 1972. p. 288.

² as reported in our issue of Oct. 1975, p. 263.



RAMANA JAYANTI AT COLOMBO: *The beautifully decorated portrait of Sri Bhagavan and the devotees who celebrated the Jayanti. Sri K. Navaratnam is seen first on the right.*

AT COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

The 97th Birthday of Bhagavan Ramana was celebrated on January 6, at *Ramana Manthiram*, Colombo, the house of the late Sri K. Ramachandra. After puja, bhajan-music was provided by Sri Ramachandra's two daughters. Prasad received from Sri Bhagavan's Abode of Grace at Arunachala was distributed to all assembled.

The function was indescribably blissful, reports our devotee, *Sri T. Navaratnam*, from Colombo.

AT RAMANA BHAKTA SABHA, ALWARPET, MADRAS

Jayanti was celebrated on January 23. After *Vedaparayana*, Sri C. N. Singaravelu gave a talk. Smt. Lakshmi Sivaraman sang devotional songs. On January 30, Sri Swami Dayananda of Chinmaya Mission gave a talk on Bhagavan's *Upadesa Sara*. At the weekly Sunday meetings, Sri M. S. Nagarajan is giving talks on Bhagavan's *Collected Works*.

"RAMANA MAHARSHI CENTRE, BOMBAY"

Devotees of Sri Bhagavan in Bombay, Gujarat and Maharashtra, are requested to send suggestions to

**Sri P. V. Somasundaram,
11/155, Adarsh Nagar, Worli,
BOMBAY-400 025.**

regarding the construction of
*Sri Ramana Maharshi Centre at Bandra,
Bombay.*

SRI RAMANA SATCHIDANANDA SAMAJ

Sri Ramana Maharshi Jayanti Celebrations were inaugurated by Sri K. V. Rajagopal on Jan. 2. Sri T. Ramachandra Rao, Secretary of "Sri Ramana Satchidananda Samaj" (9/1, Krishnapuram, Madras-94), explained the main teaching of Maharshi. Sri K. V. Rajagopal spoke of Sri Ramana Maharshi's divine grace.

Sri Nidamangalam Krishnamurthy Bhagavata. Sri Ki. Va. Jagannathan, Sri A. Ramamoorthy Sarma, Sri P. Subramania Sastry, Sri M. R. Krishnan, Dr. R. K. Sundaram, Prof. K. Seshadri, Sri M. S. Nagarajan and Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan spoke during the celebrations.

Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, speaking on the concluding day, Jan. 9, described the *sama darsana* of the *Jnani*.

* * *

Reports of Bhagavan's *Jayanti* celebrations have also been received from Sri K. Hari Prasad, Secunderabad, Sri Chinmay Dev of Orai (U.P.), Sri Ramana Arunachala Sadhanalaya, Belgum, the devotees of Hubli, from Tiruchuzhi, the birth-place of Bhagavan and Ramana Bhakta Sabha, Chepauk, Madras.

PILGRIMS

We are very happy to have in our midst a dedicated and sincere devotee from West Germany; she is *Mrs. Karin Lehmann-Stegemann*, from Hamburg. She spent three months from the middle of November 1976 at our Ashram in quiet meditation and *vichara sadhana*. Our readers will be glad to read the following statement of hers:

"I learned first of Bhagavan in 1959 through the German edition of His TALKS. Since then they became a signpost for my spiritual life. Those marvellous and profound replies to the manifold questions of His devotees and visitors were far superior to all other teachings which I had come across. They guided my meditation provided solutions for all my problems. When my friends, the Countess Matuschka and Father Ramachandra of Ceylon talked about their stay at Sri Ramanasramam, my desire increased, to be there for some time in that place, where the great sage lived and his Presence is still felt.



Mrs. Karin Lehmann-Stegemann

In course of time this wish got fulfilled in a most unexpected way. I had worked for years for the Buddhist Society in Hamburg; now I found able successors; also the circle of German friends of Zen — *Zen-Freundes-Kreis* — organised by me, could proceed independently. Meditation circles in Hamburg had grown strong enough to go on for some time without my guidance. In due course, I was able to come to Arunachala in November last.

"Though my knowledge of English is rather poor, I felt, after only a few days, that I had found my spiritual Home. Ninety days of intense meditation I experienced the very Presence of the Sage and got deep insights into the true Nature of human life. Nowhere else I experienced such a strong spiritual atmosphere. This beautiful place at the Foot of Arunachala makes the visitor use all his strength to overcome Maya in order to return to the source of our deeper being.

"My thoughts go to all those friends, who take so much trouble in order that the many devotees of Bhagavan may follow their *sadhana* undisturbed, and to those good friends and co-devotees, whose spiritual experiences on this Path are very helpful. Bhagavan will live for ever within my heart. Even so I look forward for my return to this Ashram for further blessings on my *sadhana*".

KARIN LEHMANN-
STEGEMANN, Hamburg.

DELHI RAMANA KENDRA NEWS

In October 1976 there were two series of lectures which were enthusiastically received by large audiences. *Rajkumari Prabhavati Raje's* talks were on *Upadesa Sara*. Quoting profusely from Sanskrit, Marathi, Hindi and Tamil and recalling Bhagavan's conversations, she often moved the listeners to shed tears of joy.

* * * *

In a series of seven discourses *Sri Swami Bhoomananda Tirtha* of Narayana Tapovanam, expounded *Sat Darshan* with the help of parallel passages from *Yoga Vāsishtha*, *Bhāgavata* and other classics.

* * * *

On December 5, 1976, *Kartika Dipam* was celebrated in a fitting manner. The shrine roof was illuminated and the whole of *Aksharamana-malai* was sung in chorus.

* * * *

At the largely-attended public meeting held on February 6, *Prof. Swaminathan* explained the relevance of Maharshi's teachings to contemporary problems.

* * * *

On January 9, *Sri Āṇḍavan Swamigal* of Srirangam visited the Kendra where he was welcomed with *purnakumbham*. In a brief speech he recalled his numerous *Ramayana* discourses at the Ramana Bhakta Sabha, Alwarpet, Madras, and congratulated the devotees and workers on their *seva* to the eminent *jivanmukta*.

* * * *

On February 22, *Sivaratri* was celebrated with the chanting of *Rudram*, singing of *Siva Puranam* and a discourse by *Sri K. C. Subbiah*.

* * * *

At the Annual Meeting held on January 30, accounts were passed and new office-bearers were elected. *Sri V. S. Hejmadi* (former Chairman, UPSC) was elected Vice-President and *Sri S. N. Tripathi*, a member of the Governing Body.

Introduced by a devotee in Caracas, Mrs. Monique Meu, after visiting a few other places in India, arrived at our Ashram on January 26. She spent three weeks here, and was very much impressed by the serenity and homely atmosphere of the place.

She writes :

"After years of wandering in the spiritual path, I received valuable advice and guidance from a Yoga professor who is deeply versed in the Advaita philosophy and has for Sri Ramana Maharshi a profound admiration and love that I too felt. But, at that time, I could not follow the Vichara and continued my wanderings until finally I felt the urge of coming to India to find a Master. Fortunately, I had planned to come to Tiruvannamalai, thanks to my devotion to Ramana Maharshi. When I saw Arunachala, its great Power impressed me : it was Shiva with all His might who was standing in front of me ! Since my first steps in Yoga, I have been a worshipper of this Divinity. Then facing Arunachala, I suddenly understood that the Master I was looking for was here, Bhagavan ! In the Meditation



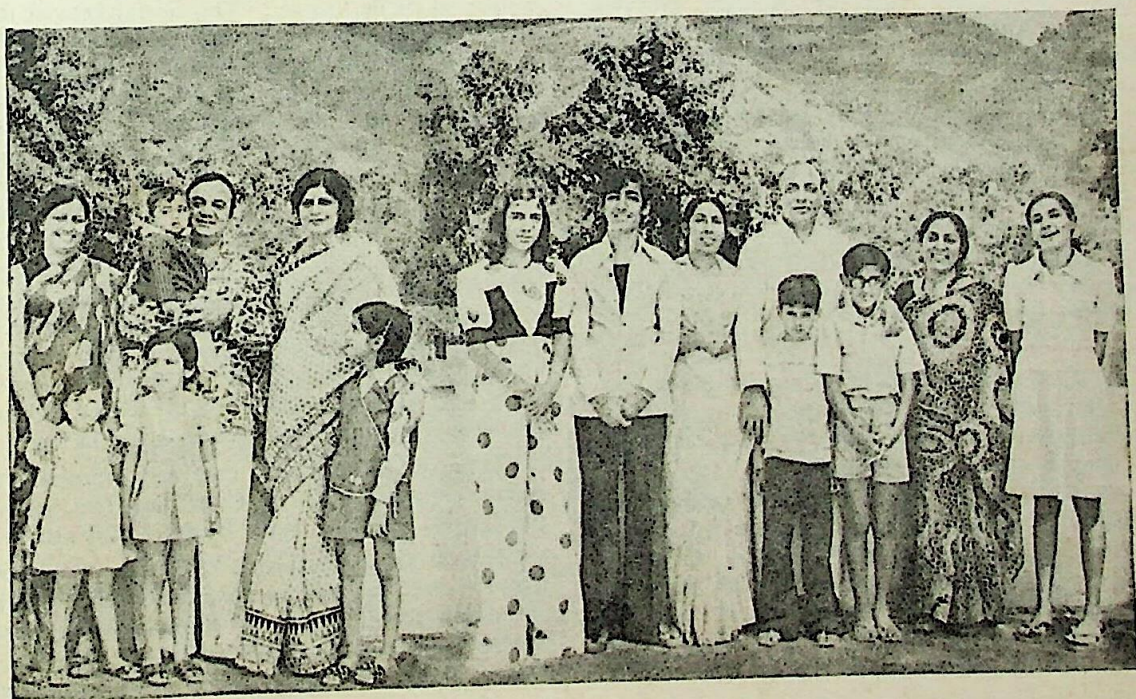
Mrs. Monique Meu

Hall, He gave me His blessing : a flow of Peace, Harmony and Love penetrated me as thirsty soil, and I cried, but from happiness, that time ! Since that moment, the power, the Love of Ramana in His invisible Presence, guided very softly my meditations, making me understand what had been hidden before. The *Shivaratri* had been the culmination of my stay (short, but intense in experiences) in this specially peaceful and powerful Ashram where the persons have been very kind and 'smiling' to me. In the dining-hall, through their gentleness and warmth of attitude, they give to this place a most pleasant atmosphere and make the tasty, abundant food taste even better. . . . I thank every person who has made me feel 'at home' and I wish each one to live in the Bliss of Ramana, their own self."

— MRS. MONIQUE MEU.

KHANNA FAMILY

As reported in our April, 1976 issue, p. 129, the entire family of Sri H. C. Khanna of Kanpur, are ardent devotees of Bhagavan, the grandchildren no less than the elders. The tiny tots in the dining hall eat whatever is served on their leaves, which look clean and fresh after the meal, as they themselves proudly say : "Our *Pitaji* (grandfather) has told us that Bhagavan ate so neatly that the leaf



KHANNA FAMILY : (l. to r.): BACK ROW : Smt. Kusum Kapur, Dr. Krishan Khanna with baby Gautam, Smt. Premi Khanna, Ritu, Pavan, Smt. Suneeta Khanna, Kailash Khanna, Smt. Uma Khanna and Alka. FRONT ROW : Shivani, Rathika, Namrata, Rajnesh and Gagan.

would look fresh even after the meal. We also want to follow Him!"

This year, *Wg. Cdr. Kailash Khanna* and *Dr. Krishan Khanna*, came to the Ashram with their families. Kailash told our *Managing Editor* how fortunate he was that as a boy he had the opportunity of touching the holy feet of Bhagavan. He feels deeply indebted to his father who had taught him to do so in those days, which, he said, was the foundation for his spiritual quest. Kailash, like every member of the Khanna family, daily reads some passage from Bhagavan's works before beginning his routine of official and domestic duties. He was so happy that he could be at Arunachala with his wife, *Smt. Suneeta*, and children — *Pavan, Ritu and Gagan*; and that he could go round the Hill with them all.

Dr. Krishan, a Dental Surgeon in Kanpur, the youngest son, in addition to his own family, brought his sister, *Smt. Kusum Kapur* and her children also. They were joined later by Kusum's husband, *Sri Ajay Kapur*, a successful businessman, also of Kanpur. It was very amusing to see Krishan's daughters, aged 5 and 7, plying him with all sorts of questions on Bhagavan! *Dr. Krishan* and his wife *Smt. Premi*, were happy to 'introduce' the latest arrival (his new born son, *Gautam*) to Sri Bhagavan and to the benevolent atmosphere of Arunachala!

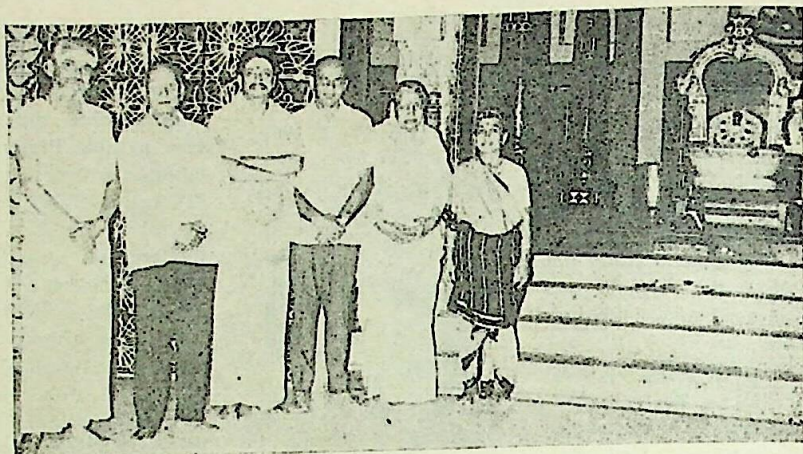
The eldest of the family, *Sri Ranvir Khanna*, sent his wife, *Smt. Uma* and his daughter, *Alka*,³ along with this party.

* * * *

Sri H. C. Khanna and *Smt. Premvati Khanna* of Kanpur, are by now well-known to our readers. Almost every year we are happy to write about them at least in one issue.

After the visit of their children and grandchildren as reported above, they arrived at the Ashram in the first week of February and spent three weeks. They performed special pujas at Sri Bhagavan's Shrine of Grace and at the Mother's Shrine and also offered a *Biksha* to the sadhus and inmates of the Ashram.

They were overjoyed when they suddenly had a visit of their eldest son, *Sri Ranvir Khanna* (from Bombay). Pressed by business commitments Sri



(l. to r.): *Sri T. N. Venkataraman*, Ashram President, *Sri H. C. Khanna*, our *Managing Editor*, *Sri Ranvir Khanna*, *Smt. Premvati Khanna* and *Smt. Nagalakshmi Venkataraman*.

Ranvir could visit the Ashram only after three years of lapse. He was, however, very happy to spend a week at the Ashram in total contemplation and meditation; and in the company of his parents.

Smt. Premi Khanna writes as follows :

"This is my third visit to the Ashram along with my husband. In the midst of my family duties at home, I could not concentrate on the spiritual instructions of our Master. This time I entered the Ashram premises with great devotion and hoped to make the best use of my time. But strange as it may seem, and though I tried and tried, I could not get over my restlessness and unhappiness. I could not understand this. I sat in the Old Hall and called on Bhagavan : 'My Master ! You know where I stand and also know my sincerity of purpose. Please guide me on and put me on the right path, though I am a busy householder. I demand my right from you as you are my real Father. You will have to make this restless mind calm and quiet'. And then the miracle did happen all of a sudden ! The flow of my words ceased and thoughts stopped completely. I got submerged in the sea of stillness and when I regained consciousness I was in tears.

"Later on I found that each and every minute of my stay at the Ashram, I was improving, getting steadier and steadier ; all due to my Master's Grace.

"Though Tiruvannamalai is 200 miles away from Kanpur, the great urge to come here persisted and not caring for difficulties of travelling with small children, we came to the Ashram — our real Home. This visit of ours was after four years and during all these years the great urge to visit our real Home

³ For an interesting account on her visit to the Ashram, see April, 1976, p. 128.

persisted and enabled us to reach it and enjoy its unique serenity. By Guru's Grace things happen at the proper time. We feel Sri Bhagavan's Presence in every inch of the Ashram and its surroundings. We feel so blissful spontaneously at the depth of our being. We are now fully aware of the ever-present Grace of our Master. Although Bhagavan is always with us where we are, a sense of separation is inevitable when we have to return to our place on duty's call".

SMT. PREMI KHANNA, Kanpur.

RAJKUMARI PRABHAVATI RAJE

Rajkumari Prabhavati Raje, while giving a talk at the Ashram, on January 6 — *Jayanti Day* — was in profuse tears when she said that it was on *Jayanti* day in 1940 that she met the Master, Bhagavan Ramana! When she came to Bhagavan she was not well-read. Bhagavan encouraged her to acquire traditional, scriptural lore systematically through expert pundits. She is now recognised as one of the foremost exponents of *Sanatana Dharma*, who gives inspiring talks throughout India in different languages. She owes everything to the Grace of Bhagavan, she says.



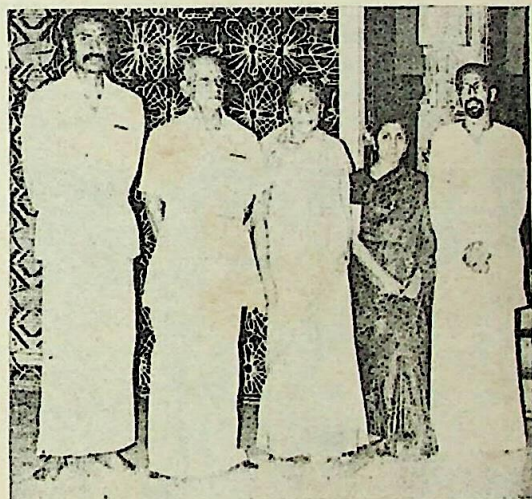
*Dr. Chandrasekhar and
Rajkumari Prabhavati Raje*

She came this time for a stay of a few days with her husband, *Dr. Chandrasekhar*, who was known in those days in the Ashram, as *Māppillai* (son-in-law), since the *Rajkumari* was looked upon as the daughter of the Ashram! They prolonged their stay for 15 days and were very happy, as they said that the Presence of Bhagavan was even now so powerfully felt at the Ashram.

Dr. Chandrasekhar took keen interest in improving the cocoanut-grove of the Ashram by giving useful suggestions for its further development.

Sri K. K. NAMBIAR

In our issue of April, 1976, p. 126, we reported the visit of *Sri K. K. Nambiar*, his wife and their newly married granddaughter, *Sow. Geetha*, to the Ashram. We are now pleased to receive on Feb. 22, *Sow. Geetha*, with her husband, *Sri Unnikrishnan* (Regional Manager, Borosil Glass Works, Delhi), who were accompanied by *Sri K. K. Nambiar*, *Smt. Janaki Nambiar* and their son, *Sri Jayaraman*. Through it is the first visit, *Sri Unnikrishnan* showed keen interest in the Ashram activities and he was particularly impressed by the manner in which visitors were received and looked after by the Ashram authorities.



(l. to r.): *Sri Jayaraman, Sri K. K. Nambiar, Smt. Janaki Nambiar, Smt. Geetha, Sri Unnikrishnan.*

Smt. Geetha and *Sri Unnikrishnan* were shown the holy note-book presented by *Sri Nambiar* to *Sri Bhagavan*, the story of which is recorded in *Day by Day with Bhagavan*. p. 310.

For the benefit of readers we quote it below :

Bhagavan added : "The note-book incident is even more remarkable. *Nambiar* came and sat in the hall as usual. As he was leaving, he came and showed the note-book to me. I asked him what the note-book was for, and he said : 'You asked for it and so I have brought it. You came in my dream and asked for it, giving me full directions as to length, width, thickness, etc., and

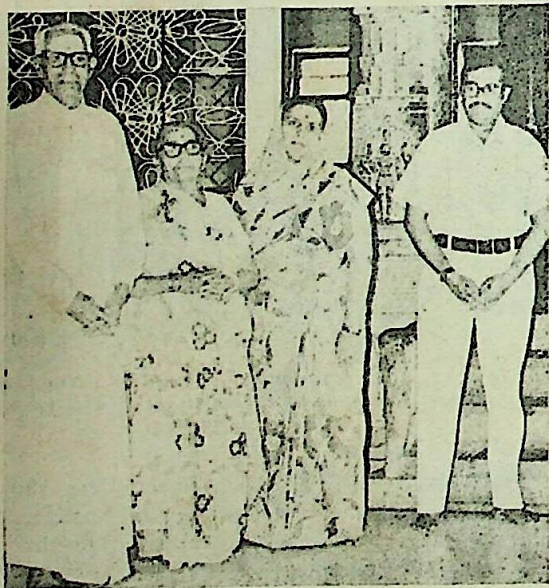
so I have made it accordingly and brought it.' Madhavan was not then in the hall. When he returned I called him and said: 'What have I been asking you for, these two or three days?' He replied: 'That bound note-book.' Then I asked: 'Why didn't you give it to me?' He replied: 'Somehow I forgot about it.' Then I showed him the note-book brought by Nambiar and told him: 'You would not give it and so he has brought this'."

Though they could stay only a day all the members of the family felt drenched in the bliss of the holy presence of Sri Bhagavan.

SRI SATYANARAYANA TANDON

Sri Satyanarayana Tandon, a staunch elderly devotee from Kanpur, who is by no means a stranger to our readers, again came here with his wife and spent three months from the beginning of December, 1976. He is a person of spiritual experiences and his presence at the Ashram is a joy to the co-devotees and inmates of the Ashram.

He was later joined by his second son, *Sri Radheyshyam* and his wife, who were very happy to spend a week at the Ashram in the company of elders.



(l. to r.): *Sri Satyanarayana Tandon, Smt. Tandon, Smt. Radheyshyam, Sri Radheyshyam.*

UPANAYANAM

The late *Sri S. P. Mukherjee* was a great *bhakta* of Bhagavan. To his only daughter, who had been childless for many years, *Ramanendu* was born some ten years ago.

After *Sri Mukherjee's* passing away, *Smt. Mukherjee* went and settled down with her daughter's family



(l. to r.): *Smt. Kanika Chatterji, Sri B. N. Chatterji, Smt. S. P. Mukherji and Master Ramanendu.*

in Howrah. His brothers and all members of their families are also staunch devotees of Bhagavan. They all came to the Ashram to have *Ramanendu's Upanayanam* — sacred thread — performed here on January, 17. Devotees at the Ashram blessed this brilliant boy, full of devotion to Bhagavan and Arunachala, who got a first prize in the painting competition at his school by drawing a picture of Arunachala! May Bhagavan shower His choicest blessings on this devoted child and on his parents, *Mrs. Kanika and Mr. Chatterji!*

* * * *

Sri K. S. Bhanu, Assistant Personnel Officer, MICO, Bangalore, and great grandson of late Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, performed the *Upanayanam* of his son, *Murali*, at the Ashram on February 6. The function was simple and on orthodox style.

Sri Bhanu and his brother, *Dr. K. S. Asok*, have donated a cottage each for the Ashram, within the Morvi Compound, opposite the Ashram.



Sri Bhagavan's Birth Centenary

The Birth Centenary of Sri Bhagavan coming off in December, 1979 is to be celebrated in a fitting manner.

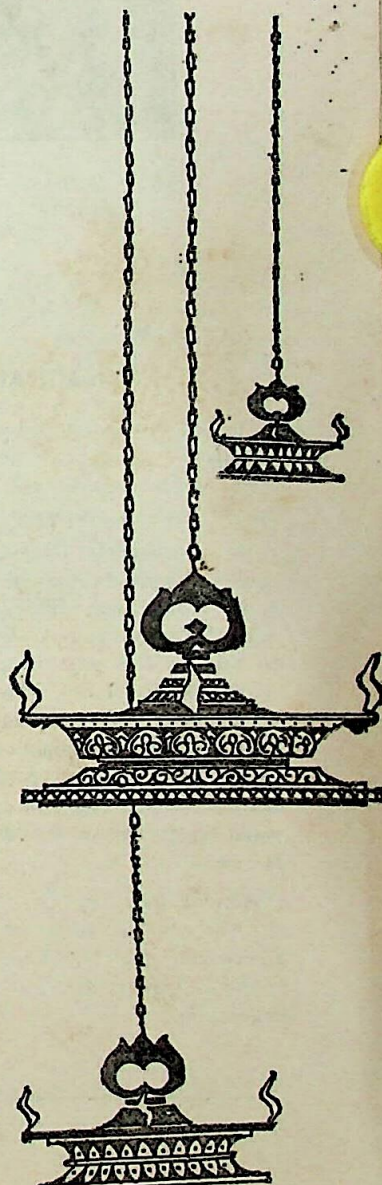
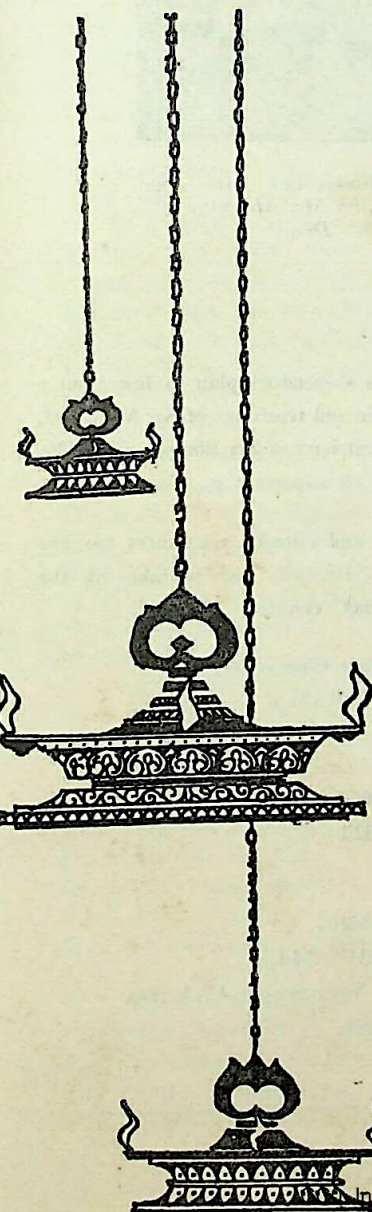
The event is to be commemorated by something concrete apart from publishing a Souvenir, which is also contemplated as one project. Any other project such as new publications, reprints, or fresh translations of works on and by Sri Bhagavan or even any charitable activity, will be appropriate to the occasion.

Devotees are requested to send suggestions so that a consensus can be arrived at and activities planned in time.

We are also planning to form a Committee to be entrusted with this laudable work.

Suggestions may be sent to :

Sri T. N. Venkataraman,
President, Board of Trustees,
Sri Ramanasramam,
Tiruvannamalai-606 603, South India





ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA: (l to r) Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagavata, Mrs Joan Greenblatt, Mr. Dennis Hartel, Sri Bhaskar, Miss Evelyn Kaselow and Mr. Matthew Greenblatt. (Only Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagavata and Mr. Dennis Hartel came this year)

ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA

In our issue of October, 1973 (p. 246), we gave details of the devotion and dedication of the members of *Arunachala Ashrama* (New York & Nova Scotia), who came on a pilgrimage to Arunachala.

Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawata, who is the guiding spirit behind this Ashrama, brought this time along with him, only Sri Dennis Hartel. Sri Bhagawata had a vivid experience urging him to take up this pilgrimage. More specific was that of Sri Dennis Hartel, who had a vision of Sri Bhagavan, who told him that He is always in Arunachala and that he should come to Arunachala. They came all the way to participate in the 'Sri Vidya Havan' at the Ashram. Thus he actively participated in it by bearing the entire expenses of the Havan.

Accompanied by Sri Kunju Swami and Sri K. Natesan, Sri Bhagavata and Sri Hartel visited Tiruchuzhi, the birthplace of Sri Bhagavan and Madurai, where He attained His first and final Realisation.

Sri Bhagawata has a stupendous plan to bring out a Photo Album on the life and teachings of Sri Maharshi, right in time for the Centenary of Sri Bhagavan in 1979. He is thus busy taking all important photos.

Devotees in U.S.A. and Canada, and others too, are welcome to visit this *Ashrama* and partake of the spiritual life. They may contact :

Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawata,
ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA,
342 East 6th Street, NEW YORK CITY,
N.Y.10003, U.S.A.

Phone : 212 477 4060

212 854 0322

or

Mr. Matthew Greenblatt,
ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA,
R.R.1, Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, CANADA
Phone : 902 665 2090

Pilgrims flock to the Ashram as ever and we are happy to mention the names of a few of the devotees who came and stayed at the Ashram and benefited much by such stay :

Maria Macek, Jugoslavia
 Jacqueline Leprince, France
 Yvonne Daughet, France
 Diane Sundin, France
 Ruth Hartmann, West Germany
 Marlies Hibschenberger, West Germany
 Dr. G. M. Timcik
 P. Misik
 M. Domoto, Japan
 Peter Gardiner, U.S.A.
 James Ellis, Canada
 Kabal S. Parmar, Canada
 L. R. Murthy, Malaysia
 Francis Javier, Spain
 Marleen Boers, Bombay
 Dolly Kolah, Bombay
 B. S. Patil, Bijapur
 K. Sivaraj. I.A.S., Ahmedabad
 K. Ramaswamy & family, Bangalore
 A. K. Sanyal & family, West Bengal
 Dr. L. K. Nadgir & Mrs. Nadgir, Mysore
 A. Dorairaj & family, Madras
 Chandrarao Mudaliar & family, Kancheepuram
 Mukul and Bhavna Damania, Bombay
 Mr. & Mrs. D. Padmanabhan, Madras
 Ramana Kripa, Shyamsunder, Suryaprakash
 & Suresh, Bangalore
 B. Lal, Simla
 D. J. Buxey, Bombay
 Mr. & Mrs. K. B. S. Reddy, Bangalore
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 J. V. Somayajulu & family, Madras
 Prof. Santinath Chatterjee, Calcutta
 G. R. Sarma & family, Bangalore
 Jal Cassad, Bombay
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 H. C. Ramanna, Bangalore
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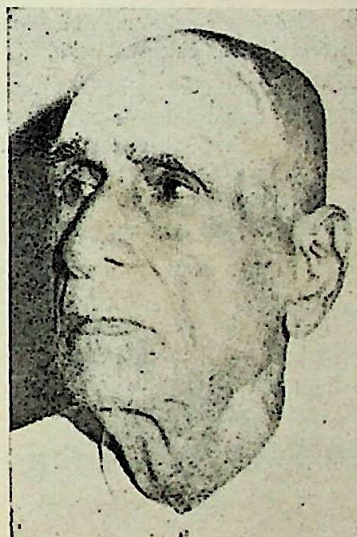
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OBITUARY

N. R. NARAYANA AIYER



N. R. Narayana Aiyer

At the ripe old age of 89, Sri N. R. Narayana Aiyer,¹ attained the Lord's feet in perfect peace. Himself an earnest seeker, ever since he came into contact with Bhagavan in 1936, he has helped many in following the path of enquiry as taught by Bhagavan. His devotion to Bhagavan was unique. His favourite ones among Bhagavan's works are *Ulladu Narpadu*, with the commentary by who in Tamil and *Maha Yoga* in English. His association with Bhagavan and service to Sri Ramanasramam will be long remembered.

¹ Introduced to our readers in our April, 1975 issue, p. 126.

DR. V. RAMAKRISHNA IYER

THE MOUNTAIN PATH LIBRARY

New Additions

Dr. V. Ramakrishna Iyer, who reached the feet of the Lord recently in his eightieth year, was a great devotee of Bhagavan, very humble by temperament and sedulously avoiding the limelight. He was the eldest son of Lakshmi Ammal (of Tiruchuzhi) who learned about Sri Bhagavan's spiritual eminence from her brother, Yoganatha, the questioner about *Society* in the tenth chapter of *Sri Ramana Gita*. Lakshmi Ammal brought all her four sons to Bhagavan and made them his devotees. She commanded the confidence of Bhagavan in whatever work she was entrusted with.



Dr. V. Ramakrishna Iyer

Dr. Ramakrishna Iyer's spirit of service was remarkable. He would often take helpless beggars to the hospital and have them treated. After many years of service in various hospitals of Tamil Nadu he settled down at Tirumangalam, near Madurai, devoting himself to *sadhana* and service.

May his soul rest in Peace at the Feet of his Master!

An Apostle of India's Spiritual Culture : Souvenir :
Pub : The Divine Life Society, P.O. Shivanandanagar, Dt. Tehri-Garhwal, U.P. Pp. 311. Price : Rs. 25.

Yoga : By Swami Venkatesananda. Pub. : The Chiltern Yoga Trust, Chiltern Farm, P.O. Elgin, Cape Prince, South Africa. Pp. 385. (Price not given).

Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student : By Edward P. J. Corbett. Pub. : Oxford University Press, New York, Pp. 584 (Price not given).

Existential Structures : By Roger A. Kenyon. Pub. : Philosophical Library Inc., 15, East 40th Street, New York, N.Y.-10016. Pp. 63. Price : \$ 6.

Hinduism in the Space Age : By E. Vedavyas, I.A.S. Pub. : United Social Cultural & Educational Foundation of India, 3/57, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-110 060. Price : Rs. 50.

Bhavanopanisad : Rendering in English, Notes and Annotations by S. Mira, M.A. Pub. : Ganesh & Company, Madras-600 017. Pp. 53. Price : Rs. 6.

Yoga Darsana — The Philosophy and Light of Yoga : By Roy Eugene Davis. Pub. : CSA Press. Publishers, Lakemont, Georgia-30552, U. S. A. Pp. 202. Price : \$ 7.50.

Sri T. N. Venkataraman, President, Board of Trustees, Sri Ramanasramam, cordially invites the readers of *The Mountain Path*, and others too, to participate in the 27th *BRAHMA NIRVANA* Celebrations of *Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi* on the 15th April, 1977, and to partake of the munificent Grace of Sri Bhagavan.

Letters to the Editor

Owing to Mrs. Lucia Osborne's protracted illness, Sri Viswanatha Swami has temporarily taken over this column.

VICHARA AND JAPA

I recently read a few books on 'Self Enquiry' and shall be grateful to your good self and request you to enlighten me on the following points :

1. Bhagavan has laid stress on the path of Self-enquiry, viz., asking *Who am I?* At places practice of *japa* of God's Name and observing the vibrations arising from the Source are also mentioned. Can one do both practices daily devoting separate time to each or is it better to take to one practice? Are the two practices similar in essence?

It is said that Self-enquiry is meant for developed souls, hence, can an ordinary person like me practise Self-enquiry?

Is it necessary to sit with spine and neck in a straight line while practising Self-enquiry? Can one practise it in lying position as well?

2. Mouni Sadhu in his book: "Ways to Self-realisation" mentions: "Analyse your whole being with the use of *Vichara* (Self-enquiry)". What actually is meant by this analysis and how is it to be performed using *Vichara*?
3. I read about a simple meditation wherein one has to imagine that God or God's light fills one's entire being, mind, etc. and in presence of God desire, impurity or inharmony cannot remain. Will you advise me to practise this meditation? Is this not similar to Self-enquiry? In Self-enquiry one keeps a thought 'Who am I?' which gets destroyed in the end and the Self manifests itself. Similarly in the above meditation one has to keep one thought viz., God fills one's whole being. Will this thought not get destroyed in the end and then God or the Self manifest?
4. I have read about '*Parā Nāma*', i.e., Name arising from one's navel. It is said that this can be done effortlessly for several hours without feeling tired. Kindly enlighten me how it is to be performed.
5. I have undergone two operations for hernia. Again there is relapse. I have tried homoeo-

pathic and Ayurvedic treatments but without benefit. Somebody has suggested me *japa* of '*Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra*' — which is supposed to possess curative power. Kindly explain how I should do *japa* of this *mantra* as my mind wanders during *japa* and so I do not feel the benefit though I have been reciting the *mantra* 36 times in morning and 36 times at night, since seven months. Is there any yoga or other technique whereby one can draw cosmic energy to heal or strengthen the body?

— H. D. VASWANI, Bombay.

First of all, the Japa of Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra which you are practising will do you immense good. Go on with it without expecting quick results. It is a Mahāmantra seen by Sage Vasishtha, great-grandfather of (Krishna Dvaipayana) Vyasa — the chandas is Anushtup. Devata is Siva, Auspiciousness Itself.

As this is a big mantra, you may have for constant practise anytime day or night, a shorter mantra like 'Om Namah Sivāya' — Siva Panchākshari. You may practise Hamsa Mantra also. Draw in breath slowly uttering 'Ham' (mentally) with the breath and let it out slowly 'sah'. This will help you get over restlessness and get established in the Peace of the Atman.

All the above are upāsana's giving one the initial peace of mind indispensable for Self-enquiry. When you feel the urge for direct Self-enquiry practise it. Upāsana's help one in the pursuit of Vichara; you may practise japa or vichara as you feel inclined. Japa is not in conflict with vichara.

You may, please, confine yourself to the study of Sri Bhagavan's works, and avoid the works of authors who have themselves not been illumined.

Sri Bhagavan's Upadesa Saram contains in itself all the steps that lead to the final goal of one's own reality. In 'Sri Ramana Gita' you have practical hints helping you in your sadhana and a clear exposition of the central teaching of Sri Bhagavan regarding the Heart.

MEDITATION ITS PRACTICE

During meditation my mind gets off and wavers and I am disturbed by worldly thoughts. Still I do not mean to give up the practice. I struggle to know 'Who Am I?' But still I have not been able to realise that "I". Yet I trust I will succeed in it. I hope that my yearning will enable me to get a vision of Bhagavan Maharshi.

In this state of my mind I pray to you to guide me on the following points :

- (i) How should I meditate in order to get a vision of Bhagavan Ramana?
- (ii) Please send me a photo of the Maharshi and also his *prasad* and any recent literature on the Maharshi and on meditation.

— I. S. MODI, Palanpur.

To your question: 'How should I meditate to get a vision of Bhagavan Ramana', the answer is: 'Bhagavan Ramana is not merely the form which we see in his photos. He is in his own words: "Formless Pure Awareness blissfully dwelling in the Heart of all forms of deities and all living beings" as you may find out at the end of his Five Hymns to Arunachala. He is within you at the very core of your being. To apprehend him there, you have to still your mind and watch the source of the 'I'-thought within you. In the initial stage one will certainly have to practise any japa appealing to one; you seem to be drawn to 'Om Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya'. You may practise japa of it. Vāsudeva, Ramana all represent the same Reality. You meditate upon it as dwelling at the very core of your Heart. You should have read about the Heart Centre revealed by Bhagavan to be on the right side of the chest. Have your lakshya there and meditate upon it as some Reality with centre there and circumference nowhere. In course of time you will understand the Path of Self-enquiry, mainly taught by Bhagavan, i.e., wherefrom the 'I'-thought springs up.

JNANI AND KARMA

- (i) It is mentioned in *Brahma Sutras* that even a Jnani retains individuality after liberation till *Videha Mukti*. As realisation presupposes loss of individuality how will this be explained?
- (ii) (a) "By him alone whom He chooses is the Self obtainable." — K.U., 1.2.23.
(b) "Killing the ego is not an easy thing. It is only when God Himself by His

Grace draws the mind inwards that complete surrender can be achieved", and "I thought of Thee and was caught in Thy grace and like the spider in his web didst Thou keep me captive to swallow me at Thine own hour", Maharshi.

From the above I feel that even though every thing is the Self, realisation is not dependent on individual effort, however, one may strive till grace dawns.

- (iii) We hear of cases of persons recollecting their past lives (births). But nobody mentions as to what happened in between the last and the present birth?

— C. SRIDHARA RAO, Secunderabad.

As for your queries :

- (i) We need not bother about what happens to a jnani after his realisation. He may seem to be engaged in various activities and to have a share of life's joys and sorrows but he is for ever unswervingly established in the One Self of all. Even the statement that a Jnani has annihilated *sanchita* and *āgami* Karmas but has to go through his *Prārabdha* is only to satisfy those who are perplexed with the seeming external life of the Jnani. The matter of one who has had only a glimpse or perfect intellectual understanding of Reality is different. He has to get rid of his *vāsanās* by constant inherence in the inner Reality until it becomes absolutely effortless and spontaneous.
- (ii) Grace is the ever-present effulgence of the Self. One has only to turn one's attention to it and get benefited thereby. Grace does not operate upon one who does not aspire for it. Yet one cannot aspire for grace without the touch of Grace.
- (iii) All incidents connected with embodied existence belong to the world of thought. No useful purpose is served by probing into the intricacies of the past, present and future and in between them. One should rather devote one's attention to the understanding of and inherence in the ever-present reality of the Self.

THE EFFULGENCE OF THE SELF

I feel the need of some more enlightenment on certain aspects of *Advaita*, particularly as expounded in your publications. As for instance: (i) *The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi*, p. 59, Q. 6.

I am not satisfied with the reply. Still I would like to know : Why does the Self not know its true nature, when the Self is Self-luminous and omniscient? (ii) When Brahman is omniscient, can a *jivan mukta* speak all languages?

— NARAINDAS M. PANJABI, Bombay.

Regarding your question : 'Why does the Self not know its true nature when it is Self-luminous?' the answer is : It is not the Self, but the ego which says 'I do not know myself'. When one enquires within oneself what this ego is, it will disappear and the Self will then be found self-effulgent. Regarding the second question. Knowledge of languages, etc., belong to the sphere of phenomenal knowledge. The Self has nothing to do with it. Objective knowledge has to be acquired by applying one's mind to it.

Patently study Bhagavan's works and practise whatever *sādhana* suits you, *japa* or Self-enquiry. Don't expect quick results. Go on practising. Go on knocking and the door will open. Above all try to go over here and spend some time in the immediate presence of Sri Bhagavan — in the atmosphere sanctified and hallowed by Bhagavan's stay.

HIS PRESENCE

Extremely happy to receive the wonderful portrait of venerable Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi.

I studied the teachings of many Masters but none of them directs so unequivocally to the Final Truth as HE.

In this portrait RAMANA answers all my questions, silent or in a few simple words that I can listen inwardly within my heart, until there are no problems any more. It is miraculous!

— MRS. ALBINE DRAB, Vienna.

AN APPRECIATION

The magazine becomes more precious with each issue and if there is a problem that needs help or an answer to a question that has arisen — I am sure to find a suitable response in the next issue of *The Mountain Path* that I read. It has never failed.

— LEONA HOLLANDER,
Glendale, U.S.A.

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— *Triveni*

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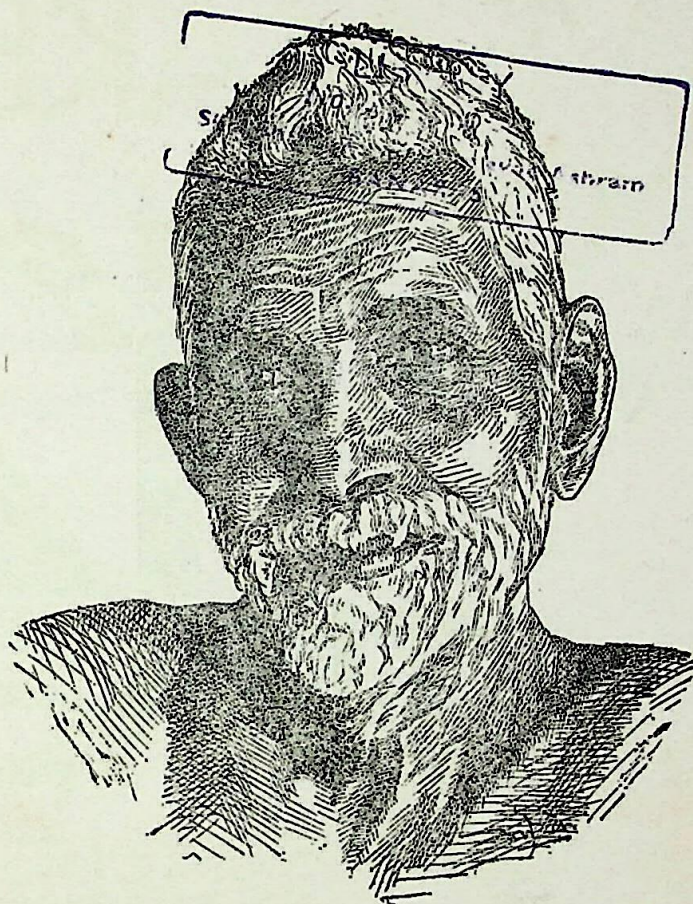
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April, 1977

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

ix



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accept us at thy Lotus Feet.

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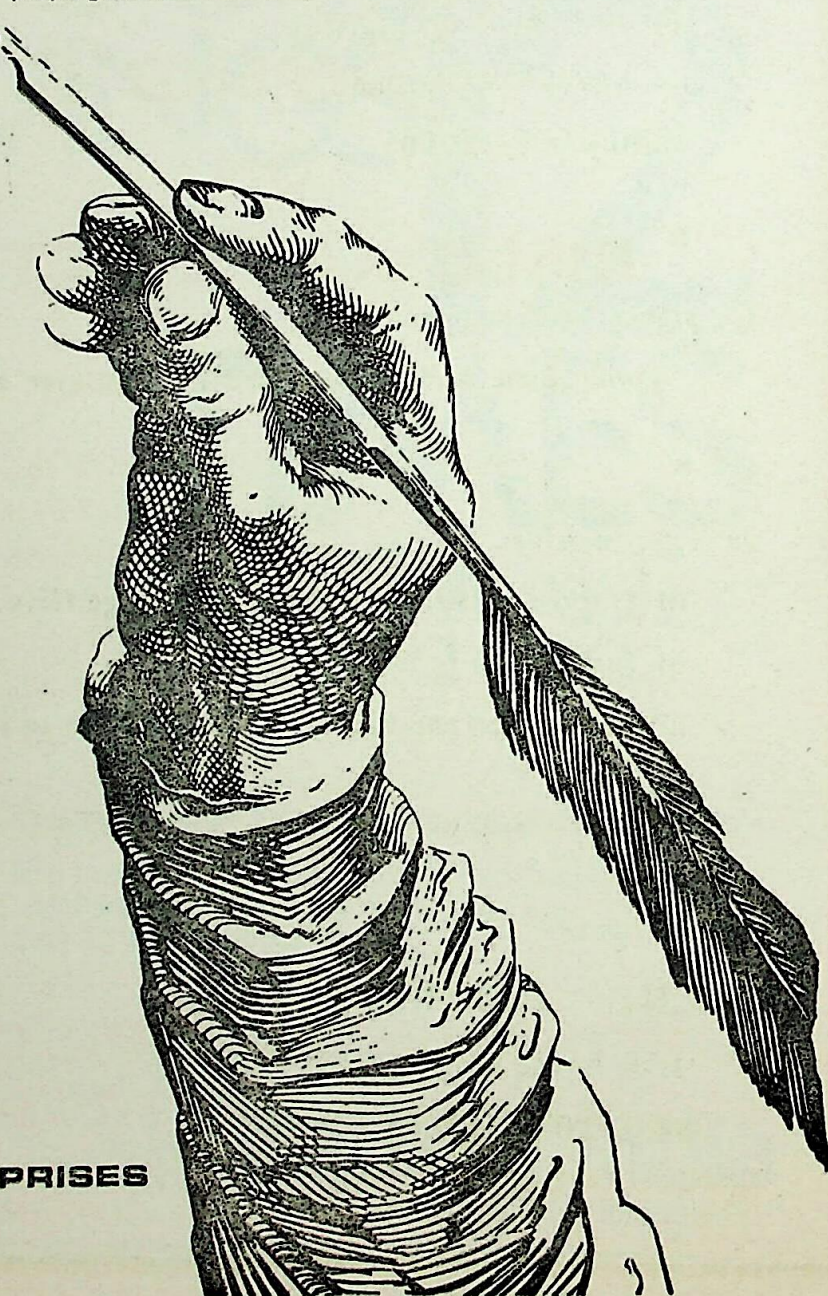
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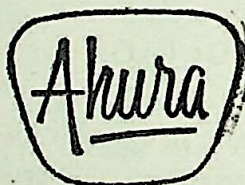
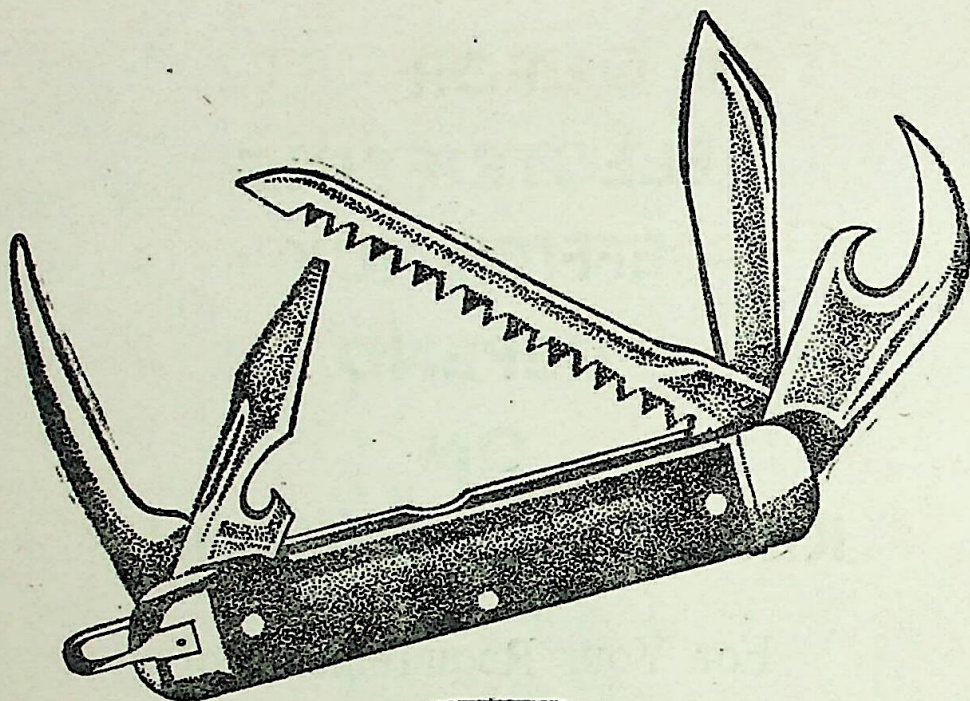
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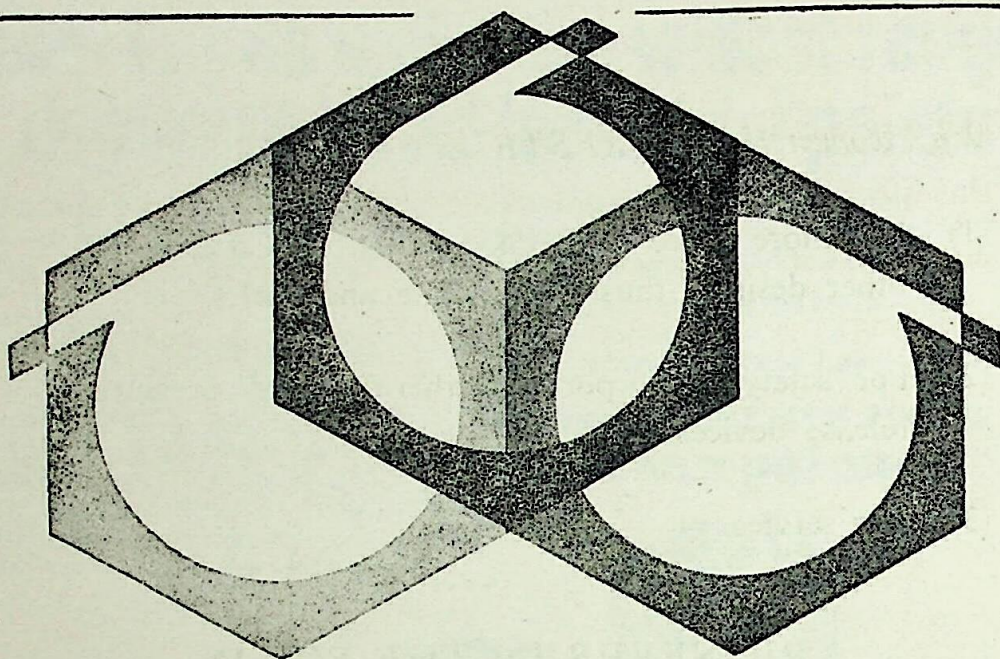
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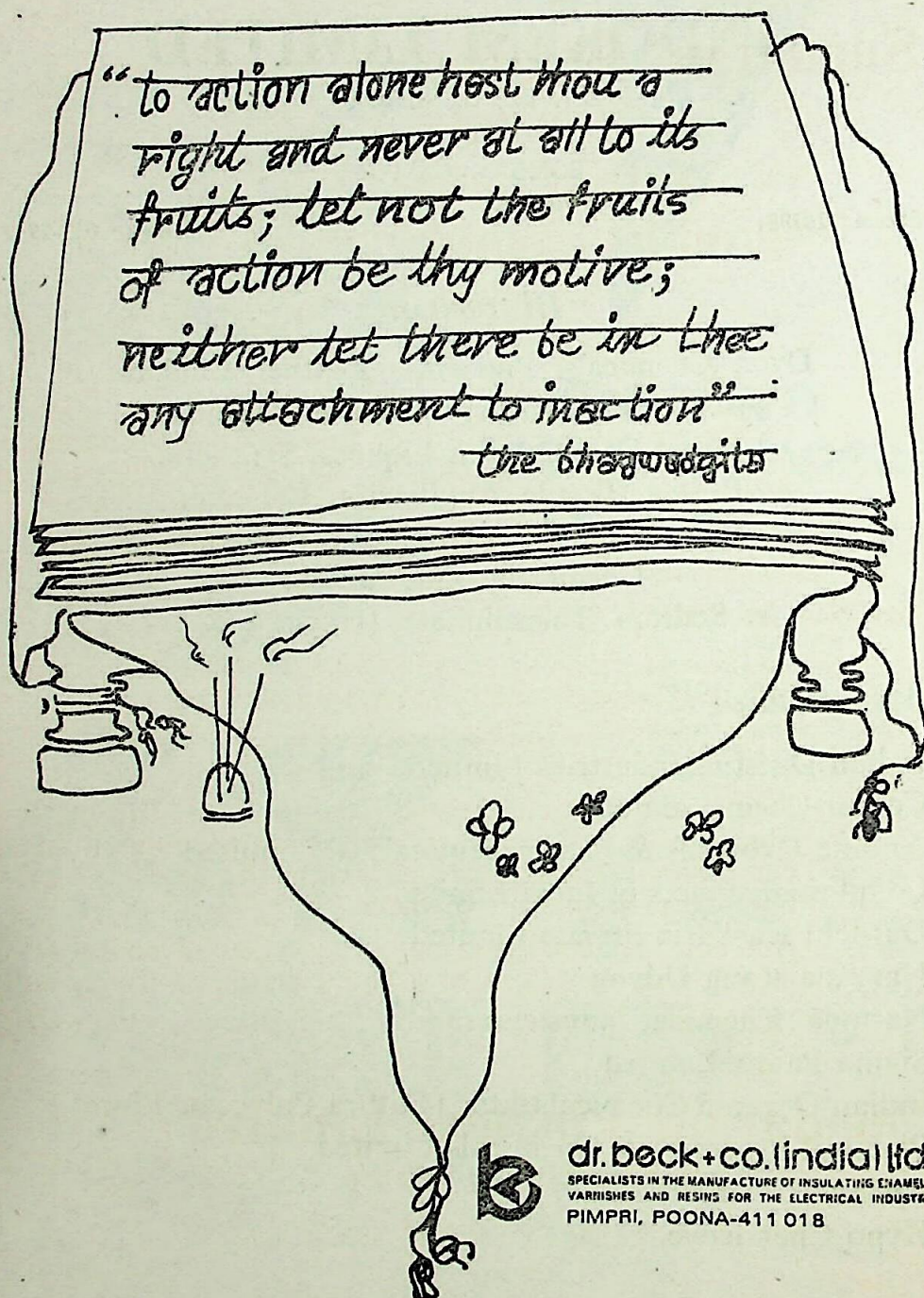
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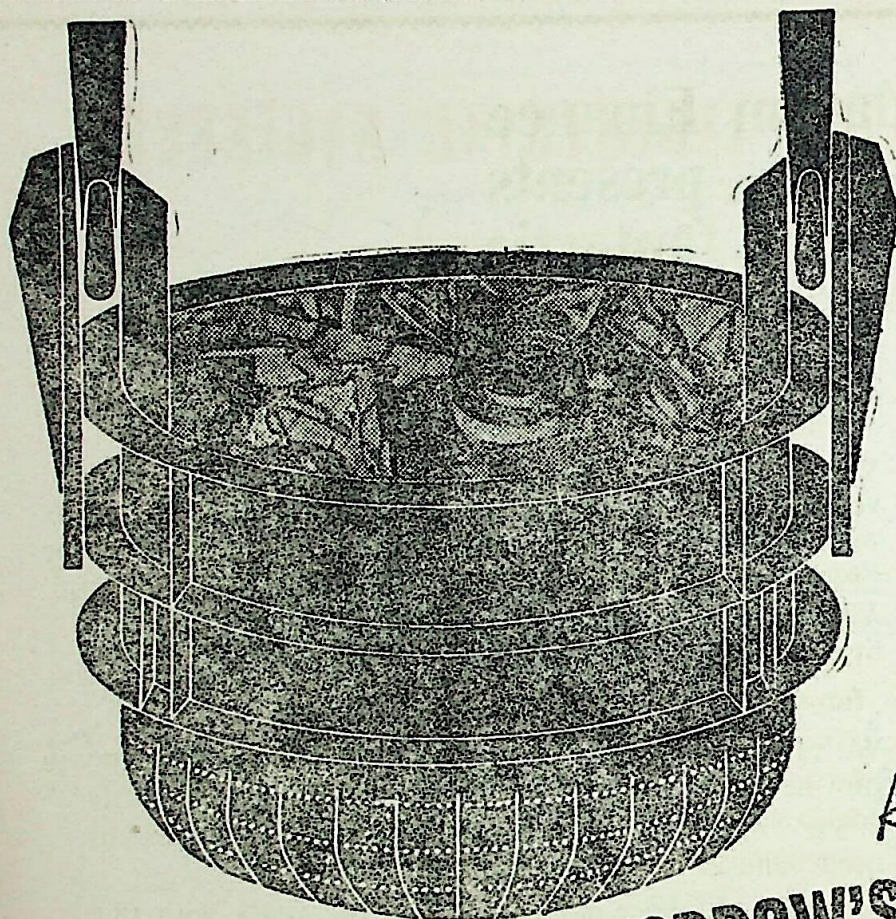
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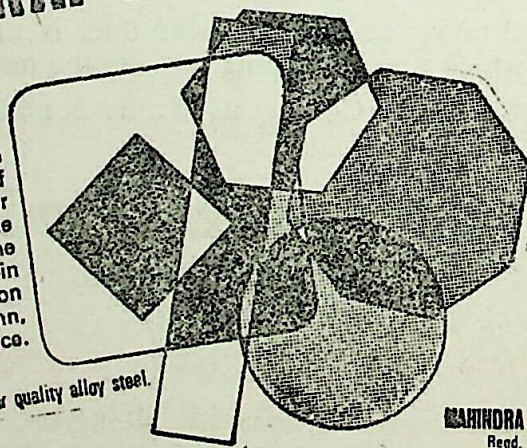
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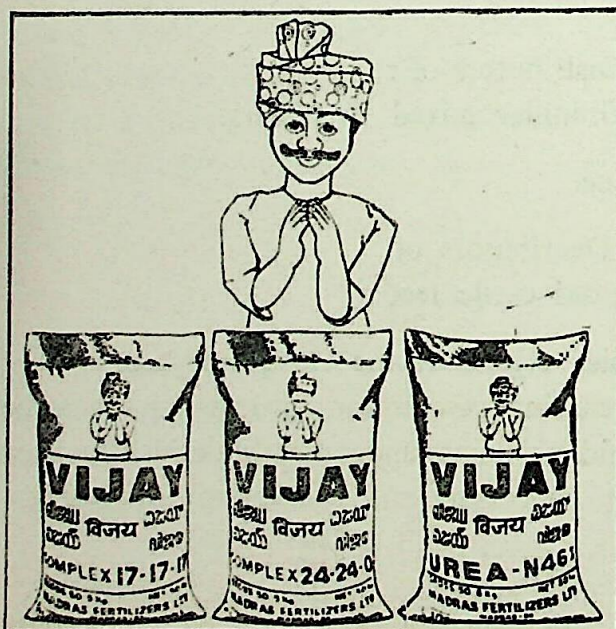
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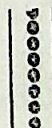
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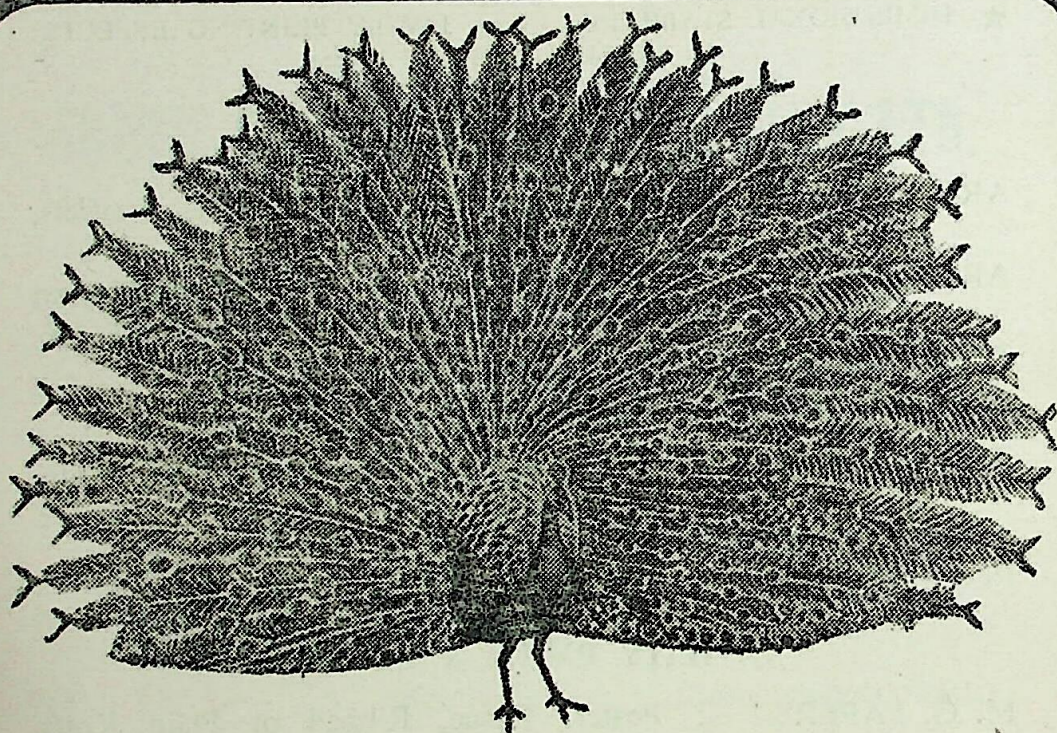
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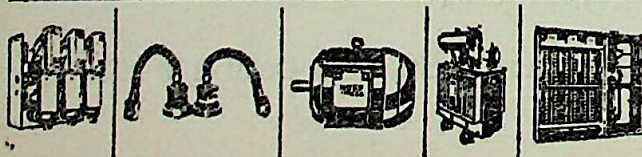
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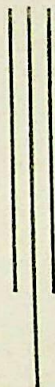
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